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Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

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Note

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Abbreviations

AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BONUCA	United Nations Peace-building Support Office in the Central African Republic
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUC	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PAS	Performance Appraisal System
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNF	United Nations Foundation
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMISET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor
UNOGBIS	United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter I
Introduction

1. The United Nations has been through an extraordinarily challenging year. The Security Council had to deal with the controversies surrounding the Iraq crisis and the role to be played by the Organization in the aftermath of the war. There was a surge in demand for peacekeeping operations in a number of countries emerging from violent conflicts. International terrorism and the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction cast a shadow over all the peoples of the world. Simultaneously, the United Nations also faced a surge in infectious disease as well as the ongoing challenges of extreme poverty and hunger, environmental degradation, human rights violations and humanitarian emergencies. It was against this background that I appointed, last November, a High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change to examine the threats we faced, evaluate our existing policies, processes and institutions and make bold and practicable recommendations.

2. It is worth recalling that the Charter requires the United Nations to promote conditions of economic and social progress and development, as well as solutions to international economic, health and related problems. For the majority of the world's people, the most immediate threats are those of poverty, hunger, unsafe drinking water, environmental degradation and endemic or infectious diseases. The Organization's important work in those areas focuses on the Millennium Development Goals. The eight Goals include halving poverty and hunger, ensuring universal primary education and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, all by 2015.

3. While there have been some successes, progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals has been mixed. The Goals can be met only through sound economic and social policies, good governance, mobilization of resources and a true partnership between developed and developing nations.

4. An important new programme in the fight against HIV/AIDS is the "three-by-five initiative" of the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, which aims to provide antiretroviral treatment to 3 million people by the end of 2005. The need is urgent because 6 million people infected with HIV/AIDS in the developing world need access to antiretroviral therapy to survive. The fight against HIV/AIDS requires strong global leadership, effective global partnership and sustained global action.

5. The gap between increasing demand and limited resources becomes even more evident and urgent when it comes to addressing natural disasters, refugee situations and other humanitarian emergencies. The appeals issued by the United Nations are consistently under-funded, with resulting limits on the services provided. Adequate funding of development and humanitarian causes would be a sound investment. It would also be cost-effective, considering the likely returns in terms of peace and security.

6. The critical situation in Africa and the plight of its peoples is a high-priority concern. The armed conflict in Darfur in western Sudan is a grim reminder of the persistence of deadly conflict on the continent. Half of Africa's people live in poverty, and it is the only region where child malnutrition is getting worse, not better. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has claimed the lives of some 15 million Africans, and continues to cause social and economic devastation in the affected societies. Yet

I have been encouraged by positive trends and the efforts of African States and institutions in dealing with the challenges of peace and security, economic and social development and human rights. African States played an important role in stabilizing Burundi and Liberia. The newly established Peace and Security Council of the African Union has great potential as an instrument for the prevention, management and resolution of violent conflict. Through the New Partnership for Africa's Development and its Peer Review Mechanism, Africa is showing a renewed commitment to poverty reduction, human rights and good governance.

7. The constructive contributions made by non-State actors in achieving progress on issues such as gender, climate change, debt, landmines and HIV/AIDS should not be underestimated. The challenge today is to enrich the unique intergovernmental character of the United Nations through increased openness to establishing partnerships with global civil society.

8. The demand for United Nations peacekeeping operations increased dramatically during the past year, and new operations were launched in Burundi, Haiti, Liberia and the Sudan. At present, more than 56,000 uniformed personnel and some 11,000 civilian staff from 97 countries are serving in 16 missions around the world. Many of those operations are multidimensional, dealing not only with security issues, but also with political problems, the rule of law, human rights, humanitarian concerns and economic reconstruction. The growth in the number of missions reflects the increased demand as well as the continuing importance of peacekeeping in helping to end hostilities and consolidate peace in many countries. At the same time, it places enormous strain on the Organization's resources and its capacity to plan, deploy and manage those operations. Today's operations will not succeed without the sustained political support and commitment of the Member States — and the right resources.

9. The United Nations must of necessity be engaged in the struggle against international terrorism, since effective measures to counter it require broad international cooperation. The Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council, which is central to the Organization's effort, is now to be strengthened by the creation of a Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate. As we join forces against terrorism, it is imperative that freedom, human rights and the rule of law be upheld and protected.

10. I hope that the momentum gradually building up for the event on the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration in 2005 and the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations will be sustained and strengthened and will lead to the positive results that our Organization and the world need.

Chapter II
Achieving peace and security

11. Violent internal conflicts continue to engulf millions of civilians around the world, drawing in neighbouring countries and thus posing an even wider threat to international peace and security. Often spurred by the failure of political leaders to provide participatory and accountable governance, such wars can exploit ethnic and religious differences and thrive on economic interests. Participants in such wars often fail to distinguish between combatants, civilians and humanitarian workers. Indeed, civilians have been deliberately attacked, children have been forced to become fighters and aid workers have become strategic targets. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism remain issues of great concern.

12. The United Nations continues to employ a variety of means, including preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, to assist Member States in tackling internal as well as more traditional inter-State conflicts. In the course of the past 12 months all of those means were put to use, from good offices in a number of sensitive disputes to a combination of peacekeeping and peacemaking in the cases of Cyprus and Western Sahara to post-conflict peace-building in Sierra Leone. In addition, the United Nations development agencies continued their efforts to assist Member States in addressing the root causes of conflict and in building their long-term capacity for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

13. The past year again saw an increase in the number of United Nations peace-building and peacekeeping missions, demonstrating the central role of our Organization in the pursuit of international peace and security, but also increasing the strains on our human and material resources.

Conflict prevention and peacemaking

14. Because of the serious deterioration of the security environment in Iraq, I decided to temporarily relocate the international staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, as well as of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, outside the country. However, the United Nations system continued to manage a broad range of essential assistance activities in all parts of the country, from both within and outside Iraq.

15. In its resolution 1483 (2003), the Security Council requested me to terminate the oil-for-food programme in Iraq by 21 November 2003, transferring responsibility for any remaining activity under the programme to the Coalition Provisional Authority. On 21 November 2003, the United Nations handed over all operational responsibilities to the Authority. By 30 June 2004, $8.6 billion of the remaining funds had been transferred to the Development Fund for Iraq. The Office of the Iraq Programme closed down on 31 May.

16. In its resolution 1511 (2003), the Security Council invited the Governing Council of Iraq to provide, by 15 December 2003, a timetable and a programme for the drafting of a new constitution for Iraq and for the holding of democratic elections. It also resolved that the United Nations should strengthen and pursue its vital role in Iraq as circumstances permitted and authorized a multinational force to

take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq. On 15 November 2003, the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Governing Council signed an agreement setting out a political process for the restoration of sovereignty by 30 June 2004, as well as for the drafting of a new constitution and the holding of elections under that constitution.

17. On 19 January 2004, I convened a meeting in New York with a delegation of the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority, after which the United Nations was asked to help facilitate a process of dialogue and consensus-building among Iraqis to ensure a peaceful and successful political transition. To that end, my Special Adviser conducted three missions to Iraq. During his first mission, from 6 to 13 February 2004, my Special Adviser, in conjunction with a team from the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, concluded that credible elections could not take place by 30 June 2004 and that an interim Government would have to be formed through other means. During his second visit, from 26 March to 16 April, my Special Adviser was able, on the basis of extensive consultations with a broad spectrum of Iraqi society, the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority, to develop provisional ideas for a successful transition. On 27 April 2004, he presented those ideas to the Security Council. During his third mission, from 1 May to 2 June, my Special Adviser facilitated the formation, on 1 June, of the interim Iraqi Government. Concurrently, an electoral mission was deployed, from 3 May to 6 June, to facilitate the negotiation of the electoral modalities and establish an electoral institution. On 31 May, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq was formed following a country-wide nomination and selection exercise overseen by the United Nations. After consultations with a wide range of Iraqis throughout the country and discussions with the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority, the legal framework for the electoral system and political parties and entities was promulgated on 7 June.

18. On 8 June 2004, the Security Council adopted resolution 1546 (2004), in which it endorsed the proposed timetable for Iraq's political transition and decided that the United Nations should play a leading role, as circumstances permitted, in assisting in convening a national conference, in providing advice on the process for holding elections and in promoting national dialogue and consensus-building on the drafting of a national constitution. The Council also gave UNAMI a mandate in other areas, such as development and humanitarian assistance, human rights and national reconciliation.

19. Under its strengthened mandate provided in resolution 1546 (2004), the United Nations will do everything possible to assist the Iraqi people in the transition process. To that end, my new Special Representative will work closely with the interim Government and establish a dialogue with countries in the region and beyond. An expanded role of the United Nations in institution-building, reconstruction, human rights and other areas, however, will depend on whether the overall security environment will allow for a larger presence in Iraq. In the meantime, my Special Representative will focus on the essential priority tasks set out in resolution 1546 (2004) from both outside and inside Iraq, as circumstances permit. To succeed, he will need the full support of the international community.

20. Turning to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, despite the strenuous efforts of the international community through the Quartet (consisting of the United Nations, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States of America) and the stated commitment of the parties to the road map initiative, the peace process remained stalled and violence persisted. The humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory continued to deteriorate, with a subsistence standard of living for many Palestinians being maintained only through assistance from the international donor community, including the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and other United Nations agencies and programmes.

21. Over the past 12 months, the Security Council adopted two resolutions on the Middle East. On 19 November 2003, resolution 1515 (2003) endorsed the road map and called upon the parties to fulfil their corresponding obligations. On 19 May 2004, the Council adopted resolution 1544 (2004), calling upon Israel to respect its obligations under international humanitarian law, including its obligation not to destroy Palestinian homes in a manner contrary to the law. The General Assembly, at its resumed tenth emergency special session, adopted resolution ES-10/13 on 21 October 2003 demanding that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the wall in the occupied Palestinian territory, including in and around East Jerusalem. On 8 December, the Assembly, again at its resumed tenth emergency special session, adopted resolution ES-10/14 requesting the International Court of Justice to urgently render an advisory opinion on the legal consequences arising from the construction of the wall. The Court rendered its advisory opinion on 9 July 2004, finding that the route of the wall in the occupied Palestinian territory was contrary to international law and that Israel was under an obligation to terminate the building of the wall, to dismantle parts already built and to make reparations for all damage caused to Palestinian property. It also found that States were under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation and to ensure Israel's compliance with international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Court said that the General Assembly and the Security Council should consider further action. The Assembly reconvened its tenth emergency special session to consider the issue and, on 20 July 2004, adopted resolution ES-10/15, in which it acknowledged the advisory opinion, demanded that Israel comply with its legal obligations as mentioned in the opinion, called upon Member States to comply likewise with their legal obligations and requested me to establish a register of damage caused as a result of the construction of the wall.

22. I have exercised good offices through my direct contacts and those of my Special Coordinator, as well as through the Quartet mechanism. At the meeting of Quartet members, held in New York on 4 May 2004, we reiterated that all final status issues, such as borders and refugees, should be negotiated by the parties and that such negotiations must be based on the internationally accepted framework for the peace process. We also set out principles for the success of a possible Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and stated that the withdrawal should be complete, that it must lead to an end of the occupation of Gaza and that it must be accompanied by similar steps in the West Bank. Discussion of an action plan has been initiated and designed to move the parties ahead and to help them to meet their obligations.

23. On Cyprus, after two months of intense negotiations by my Special Adviser and with my personal involvement, the Foundation Agreement proposed in the settlement plan was finalized on 31 March 2004 and was submitted to separate simultaneous

referendums in the two communities on 24 April. Although it was approved by the Turkish Cypriots by a margin of two to one, the plan was rejected by the Greek Cypriot electorate by a margin of three to one and therefore did not enter into force. At present, I do not see a basis for resuming my good offices in Cyprus. Instead, a broad reassessment of the full range of United Nations peace activities is called for. In this regard, I have called for a review of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. While the decision of the Greek Cypriots must be respected, I hope they will reflect on their position so that future efforts can have a chance to succeed. I have appealed to the Turkish Cypriots and to Turkey to stand by the community's wish for reunification, and have called upon the Security Council to encourage States to lift unnecessary barriers that isolate the Turkish Cypriots and impede their development.

24. In Burundi, considerable progress was made in the peace process with the signing of the protocols of 8 October and 2 November 2003 and the conclusion on 16 November of the Global Ceasefire Agreement between the Transitional Government of Burundi and the Forces for the Defense of Democracy. By its presidential statement of 22 December 2003, the Security Council recognized the progress made and took note of requests made by the President of Burundi and the Deputy President of South Africa, on behalf of the States of the Regional Initiative, that the United Nations consider taking over from the African Mission in Burundi. The Council also welcomed my decision to examine the situation in further detail. To that end, I fielded an assessment mission to Burundi from 16 to 27 February 2004, following which I recommended the establishment of a multidisciplinary peacekeeping operation in that country. By its resolution 1545 (2004) of 21 May, the Council established the United Nations Operation in Burundi, for an initial period of six months as from 1 June 2004, with an authorized troop strength of 5,650 military personnel and up to 120 civilian police personnel. Meanwhile, efforts continued towards a comprehensive and all-inclusive ceasefire, despite serious ongoing challenges.

25. Talks on the Sudan led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development have made significant progress during the past year, leaving only details of a ceasefire and international guarantees to be negotiated before a comprehensive peace agreement is complete. My Special Adviser provided continuous support to the parties and to the mediation process. I hope that the Sudanese parties will be able to finalize a peace agreement expeditiously. At the request of the Security Council, the United Nations began preparatory work on how best it could fully support the parties during the implementation of a comprehensive peace agreement.

26. During 2004, the launching of an armed rebellion in Darfur in western Sudan and the Government's response led to significant loss of life and massive displacement of civilians in the region, many of whom were forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, mainly Chad. As violence targeting the civilian population continued, the humanitarian and human rights situations in the area deteriorated into a full-scale emergency by spring 2004, as detailed in the following chapter. More than 1 million people are internally displaced and over 170,000 refugees are currently in Chad. At the invitation of the Sudanese Government, I dispatched two missions to the area to assess the humanitarian and human rights situations. Persistent reports of massive human rights violations and the humanitarian emergency unfolding in Darfur continued to be a cause of grave concern. I visited the Sudan and Chad in early July 2004 to see what could be done to resolve the root

causes and mitigate the consequences of the conflict in Darfur. In a joint communiqué signed at the end of my visit, the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations committed themselves to a wide range of obligations that needed to be met without delay to address the crisis. A joint implementation mechanism, co-chaired by the Sudanese Foreign Minister and my Special Representative for the Sudan, was established to monitor the implementation of the joint communiqué. I also asked my Special Adviser in the region to provide assistance to the African Union in its mediation of the political negotiation on Darfur. On 30 July, the Security Council adopted resolution 1556 (2004), in which it demanded that the Government of the Sudan fulfil its commitments to disarm the Janjaweed militias and apprehend and bring to justice Janjaweed leaders and their associates who had incited and carried out human rights and international humanitarian law violations and other atrocities. The Council further requested that I report to it in 30 days, and monthly thereafter, on the progress or lack thereof made by the Government of the Sudan on this matter and expressed its intention to consider further actions in the event of non-compliance.

27. In January 2004, in its resolution 1523 (2004), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara for three months until 30 April to allow my Personal Envoy to consult further with the Government of Morocco on its final response to the Peace Plan for Self-Determination of the People of Western Sahara, which he had submitted to the parties in January 2003. The Frente POLISARIO had informed my Personal Envoy of its acceptance of the Peace Plan in early July 2003. In April 2004, Morocco delivered its final response, in which it expressed a willingness to continue to work to achieve a political solution within the framework of Moroccan sovereignty, thereby rejecting essential elements of the Peace Plan. On 29 April, the Council adopted resolution 1541 (2004) extending the mandate of MINURSO until 31 October. The Council also reaffirmed its support for the Peace Plan and my efforts to achieve a mutually acceptable political solution to the dispute over Western Sahara. On 1 June, my Personal Envoy tendered his resignation, citing his belief that he had done all that he could to assist the parties in finding a solution to the conflict. He also stated that, while there had been progress in a number of areas during his seven years of involvement in the issue, the United Nations had not been able to resolve the underlying dispute. Following my Personal Envoy's resignation, I have decided that my current Special Representative for Western Sahara will continue to work with the parties and neighbouring countries in pursuit of a political solution. In the meantime, MINURSO continued to monitor the ceasefire between the parties, which had been in effect since September 1991, and to provide assistance to the implementation of confidence-building measures led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, including the exchange of family visits between Western Sahara and the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria, which began in March 2004.

28. Progress made in mid-2004 at the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference in Kenya, held under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, gave cause for cautious optimism. Concerted efforts by the foreign ministers of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development made it possible for the Conference to begin its third and final phase. Somali traditional leaders began negotiating the distribution of parliamentary seats within each of the major clans. Each clan is to submit a list of members of parliament to form the 275-seat

transitional federal parliament, which would in turn elect a president. I commend the Governments of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for demonstrating a renewed cohesiveness on the issue of national reconciliation in Somalia. I personally addressed the Somali delegates at the Conference on 8 July and encouraged them to establish an inclusive governance structure as soon as possible.

29. With regard to United Nations support for the peaceful resolution of potentially violent conflicts, I was pleased with the significant progress achieved by Cameroon and Nigeria, with the assistance of the United Nations, in the implementation of the October 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice on the land and maritime boundary between the two countries. This progress was achieved within the framework of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, which I established at the request of the heads of State of the two countries and which is chaired by my Special Representative for West Africa. The process initiated by the Commission for the withdrawal of the civilian administration, military and police forces by each of the two States from areas falling within the sovereignty of the other and the corresponding transfer of authority, as called for by the Court, will enhance cooperation between Cameroon and Nigeria. The official visit of Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to Cameroon on 28 and 29 July 2004 demonstrated the two countries' determination to continue to strengthen their bilateral relations through peaceful cooperation and dialogue. In the same vein, the long-standing border dispute between Equatorial Guinea and Gabon seems to be heading towards a mutually acceptable solution following a series of mediation sessions led by my Special Adviser and mediator on this issue. I am pleased to report that on 6 July, the leaders of the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on the joint development of petroleum and other natural resources in the exclusive economic zones of Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

30. In the Americas, the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala, now in its final year, has been working with domestic institutions and with the newly elected Government to ensure continuity in the implementation of the peace accords and the consolidation of democracy. With organized criminal groups posing a serious threat to the consolidation of the rule of law, the United Nations concluded an agreement with the previous Government, endorsed by the new Government, on the establishment of a Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Groups and Clandestine Security Apparatuses. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is also helping to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks to confront organized crime groups, which constitute a serious force destructive to civil society and good governance.

31. Despite multiple peacemaking efforts undertaken by my Special Adviser on Colombia, the Government and the guerrilla groups have not renewed peace talks. Since the end of 2002, the Government has been waging an intensive military campaign against the two major guerrilla groups — the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia and the National Liberation Army. At the same time, it is pursuing talks with some paramilitary groups aimed at their disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. As requested by the Government, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights examined a draft law on justice and reparations, concluding that it needed to address impunity and past human rights violations. Meanwhile, violence continues and is directly affecting both the humanitarian and human rights situations adversely.

32. In view of the present situation, the second humanitarian action plan, to be launched by the United Nations system in Colombia will provide a comprehensive assistance programme that will require a firm commitment on the part of the Government and other parties. I also urge the Government to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights. Finally, my good offices remain available in the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict in Colombia. My Special Adviser will continue, through contacts with the Government, guerrilla groups, civil society and the international community, to assist peacemaking efforts.

33. In South Asia, India and Pakistan have made important strides in their efforts to improve their relations and resolve outstanding issues. Following an agreement in January 2004 in Islamabad to resume bilateral dialogue on an agreed range of issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, the two sides have been conducting talks in a purposeful and serious manner. This has brought hope that the two countries will be able to bring to an end to the dispute that has troubled their relations since their independence. I have expressed to the leaders of the two countries, both in public and in private, my admiration for their concerted efforts to bring peace to the region and have encouraged them to continue this endeavour. The United Nations will remain at their disposal to assist the process in any way they may deem necessary.

34. In Nepal, the insurgency led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has escalated since the breakdown of peace talks and the ceasefire in August 2003, causing considerable suffering in much of the country. I have intensified my engagement with all concerned with a view to contributing to a political resolution to the conflict. The United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are strengthening their support for national efforts to curb conflict-related human rights abuses, and United Nations system agencies are adapting their programmes to ensure that they will be able to deliver protection and assistance to affected communities.

35. The peace process in Sri Lanka has continued to encounter difficulties and delays. However, the ceasefire has held, demonstrating a desire by all sides for durable peace based on a negotiated agreement. It is my hope that the ongoing efforts to revive negotiations, facilitated by the Government of Norway, will bear fruit and pave the way for the long-awaited reconstruction and rehabilitation of the country, in which the United Nations system stands ready to play a full part.

36. I am pleased to report that the peace process in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, has been slowly but steadily moving forward. The downsized successor to the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville, the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville has overseen the destruction by the Bougainville parties of over 80 per cent of weapons. Simultaneously, the Bougainville parties, together with the Government of Papua New Guinea, are finalizing the Bougainville constitution. Its adoption will pave the way for the election of an autonomous Bougainville government, hopefully before the end of this year. With the establishment of the autonomous Government, the Mission will have completed its mandate.

37. I continued to provide good offices aimed at facilitating national reconciliation and democratization in Myanmar. My Special Envoy visited Yangon in September 2003 and March 2004 and engaged relevant actors. On 17 May, the Government reconvened the National Convention to draft a new constitution, regrettably without the participation of the National League for Democracy and some ethnic nationality parties. I have stated that for the Government's political road map to be considered

as a credible and all-inclusive vehicle for a democratic transition, the remaining restrictions on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her deputy, U Tin Oo, should be lifted and the National League for Democracy's offices permitted to reopen.

38. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Government of Indonesia, in support of the latter's pursuit of political, economic and social reforms, continues in a constructive manner. Notably, the United Nations provided technical assistance to Indonesia's parliamentary and presidential elections held in recent months. Indonesia's national unity and territorial integrity can best be ensured through respect for democratic norms and the promotion of human rights. In this connection, it should be noted that the Government on 19 May changed the military emergency status in Aceh to a civil emergency. I hope that such a change in status will result in unimpeded access to the population in Aceh so that the Organization can resume all of its humanitarian and developmental activities there. I also remain concerned about the situation in Ambon, Maluku, where sectarian violence flared up again in April. I continue to believe that the perpetrators of serious human rights violations committed in 1999 in Timor-Leste (then East Timor) must be brought to justice.

39. On the Korean Peninsula, my Personal Envoy continued his efforts to mobilize international humanitarian assistance for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through the United Nations system, with some progress. I am increasingly concerned about the health situation in the country, of which children are the main victims. Politically, I have focused my efforts on supporting the six-party talks as the most promising way to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free peninsula and a comprehensive settlement of related issues. I remain convinced that durable solutions to these issues will have to take into account the long-term economic needs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In close consultation with that country's Government and other Governments concerned, my Personal Envoy has established expert groups to explore steps and measures by which the international community can best assist the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in meeting its energy needs and modernizing its economy.

40. The United Nations continues to work on enhancing its institutional capacity for conflict prevention and peacemaking. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the prevention of armed conflict, the United Nations system has increased its assistance to Member States in building national capacity for the prevention of conflict. Country teams have started to better integrate such assistance into their programmes. United Nations agencies and departments, acting under the auspices of the Inter-agency/Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination, have also assisted a growing number of Member States, at their request, in building the capacity and skills of institutions, government and civil society for ensuring the peaceful settlement of disputes and enhancing sustainable development and social cohesion, including the consolidation of democratic governance.

Peacekeeping and peace-building

41. The reporting period witnessed a surge in demand for United Nations peacekeeping activities, with the establishment of new and complex operations in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi and Haiti — the last three in quick succession. As at July 2004, the United Nations had more than 56,000 peacekeepers, including troops,

military observers and civilian police, serving in 16 operations around the world. The increase in the number of peacekeeping missions poses a serious challenge to the Organization's capacity for effective planning, timely deployment and the provision of sustained support for such operations. The new operations will not succeed without the continued political, financial and human resources of the Member States.

42. Peacekeeping mandates authorized by the Security Council have increasingly sought to create the conditions necessary for preventing a relapse into conflict by helping parties to accelerate national recovery and assume primary responsibility, with support from the international community, for the peace-building process. The effectiveness and success of United Nations peacekeeping and peace-building interventions remain contingent upon the promotion and implementation of regional integrated approaches to challenges when they are transnational in origin and effect. The Office of the Special Representative for West Africa, established in 2002 as the United Nations Office for West Africa, has provided the Security Council with recommendations on practical ways to combat such cross-cutting and subregional problems in West Africa. Under the leadership of my Special Representative, the Office has continued to hold periodic consultations with all heads of United Nations missions in the subregion aimed at promoting inter-mission cooperation.

43. Although some progress has been made in the transitional process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the process was impeded by lingering mistrust among various components of the Government of National Unity and Transition. Relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda and Uganda improved somewhat following the adoption of the Principles on Good Neighbourly Relations and Cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda in New York in September 2003. Yet the pace of normalization of bilateral relations has slowed down since the beginning of 2004. Meanwhile, the Ituri Brigade of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo consolidated its military positions in Ituri and deployed to several locations in the interior of the region, thereby restoring some peace and stability. The leaders of most armed groups in Ituri signed a declaration on 14 May 2004 committing themselves to fully supporting disarmament efforts and the national transitional process. The mine action coordination centre coordinated a survey of mined land and roads in the Ituri District, thus contributing to safe mission deployment. In the Kivus, MONUC also deployed a brigade-sized force. On 26 May 2004, however, fighting broke out in Bukavu, South Kivu, between troops loyal to the Government of National Unity and Transition and those loyal to dissident factions of the former Congolese Rally for Democracy-Goma. While the crisis reached the national level, the situation was brought under control with the withdrawal of troops loyal to the dissident elements from the town. Following the deterioration of bilateral relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda as a result of the Bukavu crisis, a mini-summit on the Democratic Republic of the Congo was held in the margins of the African Union summit held in Addis Ababa on 6 July, during which it was agreed to establish a Democratic Republic of the Congo/Rwanda joint verification mechanism.

44. The Economic Community of West African States force, which has been deployed in Côte d'Ivoire since January 2003, sharing responsibility for peacekeeping duties with the French force (Licorne), continued to face serious logistical and financial shortfalls. ECOWAS and the Ivorian parties proposed that the United Nations take over peacekeeping functions in Côte d'Ivoire with the

establishment of a multidimensional operation. By its resolution 1528 (2004) of 27 February 2004, the Security Council established the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire as from 4 April. Its mandate included monitoring the ceasefire; supporting the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme; protecting United Nations personnel and civilians under imminent threat of violence; supporting the provision of security for the ministers of the Government of National Reconciliation; facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance; providing oversight, guidance and technical assistance for the 2005 elections; and protecting human rights and assisting the Government in reviving and restoring the rule of law. The Operation had reached its authorized strength of 6,240 troops by mid-August 2004.

45. Serious obstacles to the Ivorian peace process emerged, however, in 2004 in terms of the deepening rift between the President, the Prime Minister and the opposition parties. This eventually led to the opposition's suspension of participation in the Government as from 7 March. On 25 March, opposition demonstrations in Abidjan resulted in violent clashes between the Ivorian security forces and demonstrators and the arrest of opposition members. In response to requests from the President and Prime Minister, an International Commission of Inquiry visited Côte d'Ivoire from 15 to 28 April. The Commission concluded that the demonstrations of 25 March had been used for a carefully planned and executed operation by the Ivorian security forces, as well as special units and parallel forces, targeting opposition parties and community groups. Given the dangerous stalemate in the peace process, I convened a mini-summit on Côte d'Ivoire on 6 July in the margins of the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa. Participants, who included President Laurent Gbagbo, agreed to convene a larger summit in Accra. At the Accra meeting, held from 29 to 31 July, the Ivorian parties agreed on key issues, including resuming the functioning of the Government of National Reconciliation; delegating authority from the President to the Prime Minister and starting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. I expect all parties to abide fully by their commitments.

46. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone continued to successfully implement its mandate to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in consolidating peace. With the support of UNAMSIL and other bilateral and multilateral partners, the Government of Sierra Leone has made significant progress in key areas, such as the reintegration of ex-combatants, the return of refugees, the consolidation of State authority, the restoration of government control of diamond-mining activities and economic recovery.

47. In early February 2004, an interdisciplinary assessment mission travelled to Sierra Leone to take stock of the key security benchmarks and to determine whether a residual UNAMSIL presence would be required beyond December 2004. Following that visit, I submitted my recommendations to the Security Council. Subsequently, in its resolution 1537 (2004) of 30 March 2004, the Council authorized a reduced UNAMSIL presence in Sierra Leone for an initial period of six months from 1 January 2005, with a new ceiling of 3,250 troops, 141 military observers and 80 United Nations civilian police personnel. The residual presence of UNAMSIL provides the Government of Sierra Leone with a unique opportunity to further consolidate the peace process and to continue enhancing its security sector.

48. The United Nations peace-building support offices in the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau continued to assist the host countries in promoting good governance and mobilizing international support for reconstruction. Despite various destabilizing pressures, including the coups in the Central African Republic in March 2003 and in Guinea-Bissau in September 2003, the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in the Central African Republic and the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau concentrated on the restoration and consolidation of constitutional normality in their respective countries through peaceful political transitions. UNOGBIS contributed to the successful holding of legislative elections in March 2004 and BONUCA facilitated the establishment of a consultative mechanism composed of representatives from the transitional Government, political leaders and civil society.

49. Significant progress was made towards restoring peace in Liberia during the reporting period. By its resolution 1509 (2003) of 19 September 2003, the Security Council established the United Nations Mission in Liberia, with a mandate that included implementing the 17 June 2003 ceasefire agreement, supporting security sector reform, contributing to efforts to protect and promote human rights and supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed by the Liberian parties on 18 August 2003 in Accra. UNMIL, with an authorized troop strength of 15,000, took over peacekeeping responsibilities from an ECOWAS force on 1 October 2003.

50. The National Transitional Government of Liberia provided for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was inaugurated on 14 October 2003. With the deployment of UNMIL across the country, the security situation improved nationwide. The ceasefire has generally held, although intra-faction disputes at times have resulted in violence. Some 63,000 ex-combatants have been disarmed and demobilized, and programmes to reintegrate them into the community continue. United Nations civilian police, comprising 1,060 personnel, have been working closely with the National Transitional Government of Liberia in restructuring the national police. UNMIL continues to play a central role in supporting the organization of national elections, which are scheduled to be held in October 2005. Humanitarian access has improved, paving the way for the eventual return of internally displaced persons and refugees. In early February, an international reconstruction conference for Liberia was held at which $520 million was pledged for the reconstruction and humanitarian needs of the country. UNMIL and the United Nations country team are working closely with the National Transitional Government of Liberia and its development partners to ensure that national recovery projects presented at the conference are funded and implemented.

51. Despite the impasse in the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the situation in the border area remained relatively calm from a military point of view. At the same time, tensions persisted at the political level, exacerbated by spates of inflammatory rhetoric emanating from the two capitals. In order to break the stalemate caused by the lack of progress in the demarcation of the border, I appointed a Special Envoy for Ethiopia and Eritrea to start a dialogue between the two sides. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea continued to support the peace process by monitoring the temporary security zone between the two countries, chairing the Military Coordination Commission and coordinating humanitarian, human rights and demining activities in the temporary security zone and its adjacent areas. In view of the prevailing circumstances, the effectiveness of

UNMEE is currently being reviewed with a view to adjusting and streamlining its operations as necessary. However, no adjustments should be made without careful consideration of the possible implications for the peace process and the results achieved so far.

52. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon continued to monitor the Blue Line between Israel and Lebanon and to liaise with the parties to avert, minimize and contain tensions. Unfortunately, the past year saw an increased number of incidents along the Blue Line, with Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace and Hezbollah retaliatory anti-aircraft fire. Israel conducted air raids on suspected Hezbollah positions and there was an exchange of missile, mortar and small arms fire predominantly in the Shab'a farms area. Hezbollah also placed booby traps on the Lebanese side of the Blue Line in close proximity to the Israel Defense Forces patrol routes. I have continued to remind the parties to respect the Blue Line and to abide fully by their obligations. The Lebanese armed forces continue to be active in the south, but the Government of Lebanon has not yet taken all of the steps required to assert and maintain its full authority in the region. The mine action coordination centre continues to assist in clearing land in southern Lebanon of anti-personnel mines; an area of five square kilometres has been cleared since May 2002.

53. During the reporting period, Timor-Leste continued to establish and strengthen its national institutions with assistance from the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor and United Nations agencies. The security situation remained stable. To safeguard the gains made to date and to help Timor-Leste achieve full self-sufficiency, the Security Council, in its resolution 1543 (2004), decided to extend the mandate of UNMISET for a period of six months beyond 20 May 2004, with a view to subsequently extending it for a further and final period of six months. The size of the operation was reduced and its tasks revised to take account of changed circumstances on the ground. The Government of Timor-Leste has assumed full responsibility for maintaining security and stability within the country, although UNMISET remains ready to assist in exceptional circumstances if required. The Mission continues to provide capacity-building assistance to public administration, law enforcement and the judiciary.

54. In Afghanistan, implementation of the Bonn Agreement continued during the review period. The new Afghan constitution was adopted in January 2004 by a Loya Jirga, a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme was introduced for ex-combatants and a voter registration drive was initiated on 1 December 2003 in preparation for elections. In March 2004, the Government made public its intention to hold presidential and lower-house parliamentary elections simultaneously in September 2004. Citing legal and technical grounds, the Joint Electoral Management Body announced on 9 July that the presidential elections would be held on 9 October and parliamentary elections in April 2005. Afghanistan remains an insecure environment, with factional fighting in the north and terrorist elements operating in the south. Significant progress on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is critical to ensure sustainable peace and the holding of elections. The lack of security inside Afghanistan is one of the key factors preventing the return of some 3 million Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, as well as of thousands of internally displaced persons. It is also undermining the political process. Extremists, for example, have deliberately targeted the voter registration drive. A major obstacle to the success of the Bonn process is the increased cultivation of narcotics, which fuels both factional fighting and terrorism. The engagement of the

international community remains a critical factor in keeping the peace and promoting the Bonn process. A conference held in Berlin in March and April 2004 gathered high-level representatives from 56 countries. At the conference, donors pledged $8.2 billion over the next three years to an Afghan-led reconstruction programme. The mine action centre in Afghanistan has been coordinating all mine-related activities, including the clearance of 780 square kilometres of mined land to date.

55. The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia continued to monitor the implementation of the 1994 Moscow ceasefire agreement by the Georgian and Abkhaz sides and to pursue efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the conflict based on the principle of the territorial integrity of Georgia. Its efforts have focused on maintaining stability on the ground and engaging the two parties on security and political issues, refugee returns and economic cooperation. The Group of Friends continued to support those efforts. Meanwhile, the political change in Georgia brought about by the election of a new President and parliamentary elections in early 2004 has created a new momentum in Georgia's efforts to resolve its internal conflicts, including in Abkhazia. The Abkhaz side, however, has continued to refuse to discuss the status of Abkhazia within the Georgian State, which is a key obstacle in efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement.

56. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, in furtherance of the establishment of democratic provisional institutions of self-government, devolved powers to the provisional institutions of self-government in accordance with the Constitutional Framework. UNMIK continues to exercise overall authority and to implement the reserved responsibilities listed in chapter 8 of the Constitutional Framework. In March 2004, violence erupted throughout Kosovo, targeting primarily Kosovo Serb community members and institutions, including Serbian Orthodox religious sites. The violence demonstrated that Kosovo still has some way to go in meeting the standards endorsed by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 12 December 2003. As a result, the implementation plan will give additional emphasis to security and the rule of law, minority rights and protection, the return of displaced persons, economic development and decentralization. UNMIK also continued to encourage a direct dialogue on practical matters between Belgrade and Pristina.

57. With the situation in Haiti deteriorating, the Security Council adopted resolution 1529 (2004) on 29 February 2004 authorizing the deployment of a multinational interim force to Haiti and declaring its readiness to establish a follow-on stabilization force to support a peaceful, constitutional political process following the resignation and departure of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The Council also approved the establishment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, starting on 1 June 2004 following a multidisciplinary needs assessment mission. The Mission is multidimensional in scope to help Haitians address the complex range of issues they face. Close cooperation with the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community will be key in ensuring the successful implementation of the Mission's mandate. In July 2004, the transitional Haitian Government presented an Interim Cooperation Framework, prepared with the assistance of the World Bank, UNDP and MINUSTAH, to the donor community in Washington, D.C., and received pledges of $1.3 billion to assist with a wide range of political, social and economic needs.

58. I am thus far encouraged by the dedication and political will demonstrated by the interim Government to put Haiti on a path to democracy and sustainable development. The international community must do its part and remain engaged for the long term, both politically and financially. It must seek creative ways to assist, building on previous experiences, while leaving the ownership of the process firmly in the hands of the Haitian people.

United Nations and regional organizations

59. The United Nations continued to intensify its partnership with regional organizations in pursuit of the shared goals of peace, stability and development in a framework of democratic governance and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

60. In Africa, the United Nations further enhanced its cooperation with the African Union and subregional organizations. We assisted the African Union in developing its policy framework for the establishment of African peace and security structures and continue to cooperate closely with it in that regard, including in the establishment of an African standby force and Military Staff Committee. In an effort to consolidate linkages with ECOWAS in the promotion of peace and stability in the subregion, as called for by the Security Council on a number of occasions, my Special Representative for West Africa held extensive consultations with ECOWAS officials in Nigeria on 31 May and in Senegal on 22 and 23 July 2004 regarding practical modalities for improving working relations. As a result of those consultations, ECOWAS and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa have developed a memorandum of understanding and a programme of work for 2004-2005 involving joint activities in the areas of governance and security sector reform, electoral assistance, youth unemployment, free movement of persons and goods, small arms and light weapons and transborder security.

61. The United Nations and the European Union achieved significant progress in cooperation on conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as in crisis management activities. The first desk-to-desk dialogues on conflict prevention, held in Brussels and New York in October 2003 and June 2004, launched a new phase of United Nations–European Union cooperation at both the headquarters and country levels. There was general consensus that the goals of the dialogues had been met in terms of sharing assessments of situations on the ground, deepening interaction between the two organizations, suggesting follow-up actions and identifying specific areas for cooperation on conflict prevention in five targeted countries or subregions. The Joint Declaration on United Nations–European Union Cooperation in Crisis Management, signed in September 2003, committed the two organizations to work together in addressing crisis situations and called for the establishment of a joint consultative mechanism at the working level to examine ways and means to enhance coordination and compatibility. In mid-February 2004, the first meeting of the joint consultative mechanism, the United Nations–European Union steering committee on crisis management, was held at United Nations Headquarters and discussed a range of issues concerning cooperation in planning, training, communications, best practices and supporting African capacity-building initiatives in the area of peacekeeping. Working-level contacts and meetings have continued, and the next steering committee meeting is scheduled for October in Brussels.

62. The United Nations has increased its contacts with member States and the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on matters relating to regional peace and security, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/35 of 21 November 2002. In February 2004, at the fourth United Nations–ASEAN regional workshop on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building in South-East Asia, held in Jakarta (Indonesia being the current Chair of ASEAN), new means to enhance cooperation between the two organizations, specifically in the area of peacekeeping, were recommended, as well as the exchange of lessons learned in the fields of humanitarian assistance, preventive measures and early warning.

63. I welcome the comprehensive review by the Pacific leaders of the functioning of the Pacific Islands Forum and its secretariat, which aims at developing a plan to realize the vision of the Pacific as a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, and look forward to enhancing our cooperation towards our common objectives.

Electoral assistance

64. Elections can have a polarizing effect and heighten political tensions. Credibly conducted elections encourage those who lose at the ballot box to accept the results, while technically flawed elections provide opportunities for resort to civil disquiet or violence. Requests that the United Nations provide technical assistance to improve the quality of elections and reduce the potential for electoral conflict have increased over the past decade. During the reporting period, 18 new requests were received and 39 countries are currently being assisted. A strong priority of United Nations electoral assistance is enhancing the participation of women in electoral processes through a variety of measures, including public education campaigns and, where relevant, quotas.

65. Of particular importance and prominence has been the involvement of the United Nations with electoral matters in Iraq. Following the determination by a United Nations expert team that credible elections could not be held in the country by 30 June 2004, and as agreed on 15 November 2003 by the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Governing Council of Iraq, a transitional law was adopted that provided for a series of elections beginning in January 2005. United Nations electoral experts subsequently assisted in the establishment of an independent Iraqi electoral commission and are currently contributing technical expertise for the preparation of those elections (see also para. 17 above).

66. In preparation for the elections in Afghanistan (see para. 54), Afghan authorities carried out a countrywide electoral registration drive, with the assistance of the United Nations, between 1 December 2003 and 15 August 2004. This is the first time that Afghan voters have ever been registered. Despite threats and attacks against the process, nearly 9 million Afghans — or more than 90 per cent of the estimated eligible voters — have registered to vote.

67. The peace processes in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone also include elections as a crucial mechanism for peace-building. In Sierra Leone, following national elections in 2002, the local elections held in May 2004 — for which the United Nations provided decisive technical and logistical support — constituted a further step towards the consolidation of political stability.

Disarmament

68. This year, the Conference on Disarmament benefited from focused high-level discussions during which foreign ministers voiced strong political support for the Conference. Further progress is needed to ensure that the Conference will be able to resume its role of negotiating new arms control and disarmament agreements, with an emphasis on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The demonstrated ability of the Conference to devise disarmament treaties should be used to the fullest extent.

69. Several issues relating to weapons of mass destruction remained of great concern to the international community. These included the slow pace of disarmament, violations of non-proliferation commitments, evidence of a clandestine nuclear network and the threat of terrorism. Such developments jeopardize international peace and security and may increase the risk of new instances of unilateral or pre-emptive use of force.

70. I welcome the decision by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to renounce its weapons of mass destruction programmes. The States parties' reaffirmation of their commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention is also encouraging. I urge all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to confront persisting concerns about compliance and to consider new initiatives to strengthen the treaty while striving for its universality. I also urge further efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force without delay.

71. Adopted in response to the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) contains concrete preventive measures to be taken by all States. Its effective implementation would complement ongoing efforts to strengthen existing multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

72. The United Nations continued to support efforts by a wide variety of actors to implement the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In particular, it provided assistance to Member States in the establishment of national coordinating bodies, the development of national capacity, the management or destruction of stockpiles, reporting on the implementation of the Programme of Action and the enactment or revision of national legislation on the sale and use of small arms.

73. Multilateral negotiations began in June 2004 on an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons. Agreed standards and procedures, as well as increased cooperation, can assist States in gaining greater control over the flow of illicit weapons into and out of their territories. In a further initiative this year, the United Nations conducted broad-based consultations with States, regional and subregional organizations, international agencies and experts in the field on further steps to enhance international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons. I encourage Member States to ratify the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, thus enabling its entry into force.

74. With an estimated 15,000 new victims of anti-personnel mines each year and 50 States not yet party to the Mine-Ban Convention, the first review conference of the Convention, the Nairobi Summit for a Mine-Free World, to be held from 29 November to 3 December 2004, will be an opportune moment to redouble efforts to rid the world of these inhumane weapons. I invite those States that have not ratified the Convention to do so promptly and urge all States to participate in the Nairobi Summit at the highest possible level.

Terrorism

75. Events over the past year have underlined the continued threat that terrorism poses to international peace and security and the need for broad-based international cooperation to counter it. During this period, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), known as the Counter-Terrorism Committee, continued its efforts to suppress and prevent terrorism and initiated a process of revitalization, which culminated in March 2004 with the adoption of Security Council resolution 1535 (2004), aimed at strengthening the reach and effectiveness of the Committee. In accordance with the resolution, on 14 May I appointed an Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, which will be set up later this year.

76. During 2003, working in close coordination with the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provided legislative assistance to more than 70 countries in connection with the ratification and implementation of the 12 universal anti-terrorism conventions and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). Following the decision of the General Assembly in 2002 to reinforce the work of the Branch, it has provided technical assistance to States, at their own request or that of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The connection between terrorism and organized crime, as recognized in Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1456 (2003), was discussed at the spring 2004 session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, along with the need for a global response.

77. I reiterate my conviction that the struggle against terrorism must not take place at the expense of the fundamental freedoms and the basic dignity of individuals. Success in defeating terrorism can come only if we remain true to those values which terrorists eschew. In September 2003, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights published, in cooperation with the Department of Public Information, the "Digest of Jurisprudence of the United Nations and Regional Organizations on the Protection of Human Rights while Countering Terrorism". The Office of the High Commissioner has supported the work of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and terrorism of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and will be supporting the recently appointed independent expert of the Commission on Human Rights on the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The Department of Public Information has undertaken a number of activities to enhance outreach to civil society and to inform the public about United Nations activities in the area of counter-terrorism.

Sanctions

78. The Security Council has continued to refine the sanctions instrument so that it can be more effectively applied to new or evolving threats to international peace and security. Following the conclusion of comprehensive peace agreements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia, Security Council sanctions were applied with a view to ensuring that continued flows of arms did not undermine the fragile peace processes. The fact that peacekeeping operations were already under way in those countries when the Council adopted the sanctions measures has allowed United Nations military observers and other personnel to play a greater role in sanctions monitoring and enforcement. Aware of the potential unintended effects of such coercive measures on the civilian population in a targeted country, the Council again requested reports assessing the possible humanitarian consequences of United Nations sanctions on Liberia.

79. In its resolution 1493 (2003), which imposed the arms embargo on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Security Council instructed me to deploy MONUC military observers in North and South Kivu and in Ituri and to report to the Council regularly on information concerning the supply of arms, especially by monitoring the use of airstrips in that region. In the case of Liberia, the Council reviewed its existing measures and made the necessary modifications in response to the changed political situation in that country. In its resolution 1521 (2003), the Security Council welcomed the readiness of UNMIL to assist the Committee and the Panel of Experts established by the resolution in monitoring the Council's relevant sanctions measures and also requested the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire to pass to the Committee and the Panel information relevant to the implementation of the sanctions.

80. During the period under review, the Security Council continued to receive detailed information regarding its sanctions regimes from expert groups responsible for monitoring compliance and investigating alleged violations of sanctions. These included the Panel of Experts and Monitoring Group on Somalia, the Panel of Experts on Liberia and the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team was established pursuant to Council resolution 1526 (2004) of January 2004 to replace the Monitoring Group on Al-Qaida and the Taliban. In the same resolution, the Council strengthened the mandate of the Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee and also encouraged States to inform listed individuals of the measures imposed on them.

81. Regarding Iraq, the Security Council, in its resolution 1518 (2003) of 24 November 2003, established a new Committee to continue identifying individuals and entities affiliated with the former Iraqi regime for the purpose of freezing their funds, financial assets and economic resources, which Member States are obligated to transfer to the Development Fund for Iraq.

Chapter III
Meeting humanitarian commitments

82. Since my previous report, the consolidation of peace in several areas of the world has opened windows of opportunity for alleviating suffering and rebuilding the lives of millions of affected people. At the same time, however, both new and protracted conflicts, as well as natural disasters, continue to take a toll on the world's poor, often undermining whatever progress had been achieved or creating new emergencies.

83. Humanitarian assistance continues to be unevenly allocated and its levels are insufficient to meet needs. I urge the donor community to ensure that funding for humanitarian operations is increased and is provided more consistently across humanitarian emergencies and that it better covers the needs of all sectors.

Protecting and assisting refugees and displaced populations

84. During the past year. the refugee population has decreased significantly. For the second consecutive year the figure has decreased by nearly 1 million persons, falling overall 20 per cent, from 12.1 million at the beginning of 2002 to 9.7 million at present. The total population receiving protection and/or assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees currently stands at some 17 million persons. That figure includes 9.7 million refugees and 4.2 million internally displaced persons. However, the apparent progress in the decline of refugees must be seen against the backdrop of the worldwide total of uprooted persons (including those within and outside the mandate of UNHCR), which is currently estimated at nearly 50 million, or one in every 126 persons on earth. This worldwide figure also includes more than 1.6 million refugees from the occupied Palestinian territory who continue to receive life-saving assistance from UNRWA.

85. I am pleased to report that never before have there been so many opportunities for durable solutions in so many parts of Africa with regard to the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons. In Angola, more than 3.7 million refugees and displaced persons have returned since the conflict ended in April 2002 and plans are in place to return a further 145,000 refugees this year. In Burundi, progress on the political front has enabled more than 130,000 refugees to return since the beginning of 2003. In West Africa, stabilization has led to the return of more than 240,000 refugees to Sierra Leone, including some 25,000 during 2004 alone, and the repatriation programme is expected to draw to a close at the end of this year. In Liberia, repatriation plans are being put in place for more than 320,000 refugees who fled the country, as well as for hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons, to return once the situation stabilizes further. In the Sudan, positive developments on the political front have opened up possibilities for the eventual return of millions of refugees and internally displaced persons to the southern part of the country.

86. Despite the progress that has been made, new and lingering conflicts around the world continue to present many challenges for the humanitarian community. For example, the positive steps in the Sudan have been overshadowed by the situation in the western part of the country. More than 1 million persons have become internally displaced in the region of Darfur as a result of direct attacks on their villages and gross human rights violations, while some 170,000 persons have fled to Chad. This

has given rise to regional security concerns due to cross-border incursions and the presence of armed groups in the border areas. Despite massive logistical constraints in eastern Chad, UNHCR had managed to move more than 123,000 refugees to nine new refugee camps in safer areas further inland by the end of July 2004. Outbreaks of violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in June 2004 resulted in thousands becoming internally displaced while more than 35,000 people fled to Burundi and, in smaller numbers, to Rwanda. The conflict in northern Uganda between government and rebel forces continues to take civilian lives and cause further displacement and increasing vulnerability. More than 1.6 million displaced persons are being sheltered in overcrowded and poorly protected camps where they remain susceptible to attack and abduction by rebel fighters, as well as abuses committed by the local security forces.

87. Outside Africa, tensions in the Middle East, South America and parts of the Balkans are also cause for concern. In Afghanistan, while more than 3.5 million refugees and internally displaced persons have returned to their homes since the end of 2001, it is estimated that there are still around 180,000 internally displaced persons and 2 million refugees remaining in both the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Their return is hindered by the continued lack of security inside Afghanistan. In Iraq there were no massive refugee movements in 2003, but the vast insecurity that has prevailed has prevented the return of those who fled the country in previous years. The internal displacement situation in Colombia remains one of the most serious in the world today. An estimated 3 million people have been internally displaced during the country's 40-year conflict, and up to 40,000 have fled to neighbouring countries. Although the war in Kosovo ended more than five years ago, the situation remains perilous for the minority Serb and Roma populations. Clashes between Albanians and Serbs in March 2004 left more than 20 people dead and undermined expectations for more progress on minority returns.

88. Last year UNHCR launched "Convention Plus", an important initiative aimed at strengthening the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees through the use of special multilateral agreements. The objective is to ensure that refugees receive a higher standard of protection as close to home as possible and to increase the level of State involvement as an effective system of international burden-sharing. The agreements will focus on three priority areas: resettlement as a tool of protection, a durable solution and a tangible form of burden-sharing; more effective targeting of development assistance to support durable solutions for refugees; and clarification of the responsibilities of States in the event of secondary movements of refugees and asylum-seekers from an initial country of refuge to another country.

89. Also on the protection front, violence perpetrated against refugee and internally displaced women and children continues to be a major concern. An increase in the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a tool of war has been manifested in Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Darfur in western Sudan. In order to better address this growing trend, UNHCR has revised its "Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response". The Guidelines will ensure that better prevention and response mechanisms are put in place. They have already been distributed to a wide range of actors involved in humanitarian work for implementation in the field, and training of staff is also ongoing. Efforts to reinforce cooperation among United Nations agencies in support of children also led to the launch of "Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated

Children" in February 2004. The Guiding Principles will, among other things, strengthen inter-agency collaboration aimed at responding to the problem of forced recruitment of refugee children and addressing family reunification of demobilized children.

90. Coping with the issue of security in the field, for both refugees and humanitarian personnel, has remained a constant challenge. Over the past year there have been a number of direct attacks against humanitarian personnel. Such incidents are often intrinsically linked to the security environment for refugees themselves. In February 2004, more than 200 people were killed in an attack on a camp for displaced persons in northern Uganda. More recently there have been incursions from the Sudan into refugee-populated areas in eastern Chad, where various armed groups are also present. The presence of armed elements in refugee camps and settlements creates a dangerous environment for humanitarian personnel and also has grave consequences for the security and welfare of refugees, including violence and forced recruitment. In June 2004, UNHCR hosted a meeting of experts in Geneva on the issue of maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. The meeting brought together the various parts of the United Nations system, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a number of international non-governmental organizations and interested Governments. Participants took stock of lessons learned from the successful process of separating Liberian combatants from refugees in Sierra Leone in 2003, which may be applicable to future cases. A set of operational guidelines, including standards and procedures for the separation of armed elements from refugee populations, will follow later this year.

91. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, through its Internally Displaced Person Unit, has continued its efforts to improve support for the implementation of a collaborative response to internal displacement. In March 2004, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee endorsed the Unit's development of revised and updated policy guidance on a collaborative response, including the enhancement of protection capacity. To facilitate a more robust assessment and strategic support role for the Unit, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has renamed it the Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division and appointed a new director, who will also act as his special adviser on internal displacement.

Coordinating and delivering humanitarian assistance

92. Coherent, effective and principled humanitarian response remains a priority for the United Nations. In keeping with its mandate to coordinate humanitarian response to crises, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has continued to work closely with partner agencies and non-governmental organizations to strengthen key coordination tools and mechanisms for all phases of a crisis. This has included more consistent action to allow improved humanitarian access, information management and financial tracking of aid flows, and improved support for the coordination of protection activities. The Office has also focused increased attention on forgotten emergencies, enhanced its early-warning mechanisms, contingency-planning capacity and emergency preparedness, and has further strengthened the strategic planning component of the consolidated appeals process. During the reporting period, such efforts were applied to good effect in response to crises in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, west and central Africa and the Sudan.

93. In Darfur, Sudan, massive human rights violations, including forced displacement, extrajudicial killings and gender-based sexual violence, combined with a lack of access to food and water, have left the majority of the population struggling to survive. The World Food Programme has been providing food assistance, while the United Nations Children's Fund has begun constructing and rehabilitating water systems. The World Health Organization has established a system for early warning to respond to outbreaks of disease and, together with UNICEF, is supporting health facilities and other field activities. In addition, my Emergency Relief Coordinator and the investigative missions of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have raised the profile of this humanitarian emergency and human rights crisis by briefing the Security Council and holding several high-level meetings with donors and agencies.

94. In northern Uganda, the displaced are dispersed in well over 100 camps, to which access for humanitarian operations is severely constrained. Children suffer disproportionately in this crisis, increasingly as targets of abduction and also through the loss of security. The unique phenomenon of "night commuters", in which more than 50,000 children travel from their homes every night to seek safety in district towns, underlines the tragic humanitarian consequences of this crisis. In this highly insecure environment, WFP has, through the use of armed escorts, managed to sustain the delivery of food supplies to the vulnerable population.

95. Continued insecurity and the cumulative effects of displacement, the depletion of food stocks, the collapse of social services and stagnant economies have kept many countries around the world in need of life-sustaining assistance and have offset prospects for peace. Ongoing fighting, food shortages and weak governance continue to undermine efforts to stabilize the Central African Republic. The eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have seen only incremental change since the war ostensibly ended, primarily because of continued efforts by Congolese actors and neighbouring countries to prevent any institution representing the general interest of the country from undermining their established interests. The area continues to be overrun by rebel groups and militias, and millions struggle to meet their most basic needs. The United Nations is working to meet those needs through efforts such as the rehabilitation of the country's water sources by UNICEF — as more than 54 per cent of the population lack access to potable water — and the support provided by WHO to local and national health authorities.

96. Drought and chronic food supply problems continued to blight Eritrea and Ethiopia. The last six months saw little change in rainfall, crop production or nutritional recovery. The need for measures to improve food security remains acute. WFP has been covering up to 50 per cent of the overall relief food requirements, reaching as many as 3.44 million beneficiaries a month. A joint UNICEF-WFP extended outreach strategy/child survival programme in Ethiopia is aimed at addressing the effect of chronic food insecurity on some 6 million to 8 million children living in the most food-insecure and drought-affected areas. WHO is working closely with the other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations for the surveillance and control of health-related problems.

97. In southern Africa, life expectancy in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe has declined, from an average of 46 years in 1970 to 35 in 2004. At least one child in five in those countries is expected to be an orphan by 2010 — and the ratio is even higher in some countries. A deadly combination of

HIV/AIDS, food insecurity, weak governance and chronic poverty has led to a crisis of survival and the premature death of millions of people. The concerted efforts of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, through consolidated appeals from mid-2002 to mid-2004, have raised over $800 million, thus enabling the provision of, among other things, food assistance to more than 10 million people, nutritional support to 2 million children, measles immunization to 7 million children and agricultural support to 5.5 million farmers.

98. The integrated, multidimensional character of United Nations missions recently deployed in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia creates opportunities for more coherent and effective action in post-conflict situations. Such an integrated approach seeks to advance both humanitarian relief, respect for human rights and the achievement of sustainable peace. In particular, it is essential that the impartiality and neutrality of humanitarian response is maintained in all integrated missions and that the United Nations humanitarian arm is able to fully collaborate with its non-governmental organization partners.

99. United Nations agencies have also been working to facilitate the transition from relief to development in countries emerging from conflict. A recent evaluation of United Nations transition activities in eight countries concluded that a single coherent strategy for the United Nations system was necessary to strengthen transition activities and proposed a standing mechanism to support United Nations country teams engaged in transition planning. The humanitarian and development pillars are already working together more closely to include refugees and displaced persons in transition planning and to promote durable solutions for those populations. The "4 Rs" approach (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction) launched jointly two years ago by UNHCR, UNDP and others, is now being tried in pilot projects in Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sri Lanka, and there are plans to apply it in Burundi and eventually the Sudan.

100. With the intifada in the occupied Palestinian territory continuing for a fourth year, the socio-economic hardship of the Palestinian population has been worsening as a result of Israeli actions such as closures, curfews and military operations. The emergency interventions of UNRWA continued to be an important source of assistance and stability, although the Agency remained concerned about restrictions on humanitarian access. The construction of a physical barrier in the West Bank has added another obstacle to humanitarian access and has severely affected the livelihoods of the Palestinians affected and their access to essential services. UNRWA also maintained its regular programme of education, health, relief, social and microfinance services to over 4 million Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Funding humanitarian emergencies

101. The message of the consolidated appeals process 2003 mid-year review bears repeating: while the general underfunding of consolidated appeals may not be measurable in greater loss of life as is sometimes supposed, greater suffering and recovery denied are persistent themes in all consolidated appeals. The underfunding of humanitarian action persists in 2004, in both absolute and proportional terms. Overall funding requirements for humanitarian assistance in 2004, as registered in the consolidated appeals, totalled $2.9 billion. As at 21 July 2004, contributions totalled $928 million, which (with carry-overs) fulfils only 32 per cent of

requirements halfway through the appeal period. This is lower than the response for the same period in 2003, when approximately 45 per cent of total requirements were funded. In addition, the pattern of funding humanitarian activities remains uneven, leaving some countries substantially under-financed. The response to individual consolidated appeals as at 21 July 2004 ranged from a high of 50 per cent for the northern Caucasus (Russian Federation) and Chad to lows of 16 per cent for Côte d'Ivoire and 15 per cent for Zimbabwe.

102. Overall emergency funding for UNICEF and WHO has provided them with only the minimum capacity to respond to life-sustaining needs. For example, the low level of resources has limited interventions to combat infectious diseases in some West African countries, has restricted education, protection and health care programmes in Côte d'Ivoire and has impeded support in HIV/AIDS and education activities in Burundi, increasing children's vulnerability and risk for human rights violations.

103. UNHCR, challenged by the system of voluntary contributions, is facing a recurring shortfall in the funding of its life-saving protection and assistance programmes. As in recent years, the impact of the shortfall is being felt mainly in Africa, where the needs are the greatest. Major repatriation operations under way for Liberia and the Sudan may be hindered by a lack of adequate funding. As at the end of July 2004, UNHCR had received only $16.6 million in confirmed contributions out of $39.2 million needed for the repatriation of more than 300,000 Liberians. For the Sudan, UNHCR had received less than half of the $8.8 million needed to begin the expected repatriation and reintegration of up to 600,000 refugees currently in neighbouring countries. The slow pace of funding has also hampered the ability of UNHCR to respond to the crisis of refugees from Darfur in eastern Chad. By the end of July, UNHCR had received $27.8 million out of the $55.8 million needed to respond to the emergency in Chad.

104. The WFP Iraq operation in 2003 was the largest single humanitarian aid operation in history, requiring the Programme and its donors to marshal extraordinary food, cash and human resources. Elsewhere in the world, however, WFP had to face unprecedented needs with insufficient resources. In Africa alone, some 40 million people remained in need of food aid, with roughly $1.8 billion required. WFP struggled to meet the needs of 6.4 million people in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, covering less than 60 per cent of the operation's requirements. WFP was also forced to cut rations in half for hundreds of thousands of displaced Angolans and thousands of refugees from Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan.

105. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations delivered assistance in the agricultural sector valued at $190 million (of which $111 million was for Iraq). Yet in the consolidated appeals for 2003 it received less than 45 per cent of its requirements. By June 2004, less than 25 per cent of the requirements against the 2004 appeals had been received. FAO provided agricultural inputs, such as seeds and fertilizer, fishing equipment, animal feed and drugs and essential farming tools to restart agricultural production in disaster-affected areas. Where conditions allowed, input distributions were complemented by more sustainable assistance, such as local production of seeds and other planting material, restocking of farm animals, prevention and control of plant and animal diseases, quick-impact rehabilitation of infrastructure such as irrigation schemes and training in improved farming techniques.

106. The $135.8 million shortfall in contributions to the UNRWA emergency appeals for the occupied Palestinian territory was one of the Agency's prime concerns during the year, as needs in the refugee community continued to increase without sufficient resources to address them. In Gaza, UNRWA has been able to rehouse fewer than 10 per cent of the 21,000 Palestinians that have been uprooted by Israeli military operations since October 2000. Funding shortfalls have also made it difficult to maintain emergency food assistance for more than 1 million refugees and to implement the Agency's emergency job creation programme.

107. The United Nations mine action programmes received more than $50 million through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action during the period covered by the present report. The Trust Fund is managed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Additional funds were received through UNDP and UNICEF thematic trust funds. Shortfalls across the United Nations system compromised assistance efforts in such places as Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the occupied Palestinian territory and the Sudan. As at July 2004, there were funding shortfalls of over $60 million in Afghanistan and the Sudan alone. Contributions to the Trust Fund must be more than doubled if these shortfalls are to be met.

108. During the current reporting period humanitarian workers and operations faced continued risks, particularly in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Iraq, where relief workers have been directly targeted. Security is an essential precondition for the delivery of humanitarian assistance in many areas of conflict, and thus forms an integral component of the consolidated appeals. Despite the increased security threats, donor contributions to security sector projects set out in the 2004 consolidated appeals totalled only slightly over $4 million, representing 27 per cent of the overall requirement, as at 27 July 2004. In addition, donors contributed over $6 million for special security requirements for United Nations operations in Iraq outside the consolidated appeals process. While the security sector for Iraq was fully funded, many less prominent emergencies experienced a lack of security personnel, resources and assets.

Natural disaster management

109. In 2003 some 700 disasters resulted in 75,000 deaths and economic losses of more than $65 billion. The death toll was many times higher than that for the previous year, largely because of the earthquake in Bam, Islamic Republic of Iran. In 2004 floods and cyclones in Bangladesh, China, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Madagascar and Sri Lanka affected millions. It is notable that, because of their increased capacity, many of the affected countries did not require external assistance to respond to the floods in 2004. Drought and chronic food supply problems continued to blight the Horn of Africa, where crop production, nutritional recovery and the need for measures to improve food security remained acute. Between September 2003 and June 2004, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs worked with other agencies to coordinate the response to 38 major disasters due to natural or environmental hazards in vulnerable disaster-prone countries. This includes the coordination of the response to major earthquakes in the Islamic Republic of Iran (December 2003) and Morocco (February 2004), cyclone Gafilo in Madagascar (March 2004) and floods in the Dominican Republic and Haiti (May 2004).

110. I am concerned that the consequences of natural hazards pose a great challenge to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and I welcome efforts by humanitarian and development organizations to support the implementation of disaster-reduction activities at the national and local levels. Increased joint planning and collaboration has developed among UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, a primary international mechanism for reducing disaster risk. This cooperation has led to specific collaborative programmes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador and Peru, as well as regional programming covering eight Central American States. In addition, the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction has re-focused its work to assess the effects of climate change on disaster risk reduction. It has been addressing the increasing vulnerability of urban environments, how to better support disaster response and mitigation in Africa and the continued development of risk and vulnerability information and indicators. In early 2004, UNDP launched a report entitled "Reducing disaster risk: a challenge for development". The report introduced a global Disaster Risk Index, which measures the relative vulnerability of countries to three key natural hazards — earthquakes, tropical cyclones and floods — and identifies development factors that contribute to increased risk levels. In this connection, I am pleased to note that the United Nations University has launched a programme to reduce the risk of catastrophic floods in the Asia and Pacific region by means of a comprehensive approach to reduce hazards and vulnerability.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

111. The Organization has continued to strengthen and enhance the policy framework for the protection of civilians in armed conflict over the past year. In December 2003, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs presented to the Security Council a ten-point platform on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, which formed the basis for my fourth report to the Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, submitted in May 2004.

112. There has been notable progress in the five years since the agenda on the protection of civilians in armed conflict was launched. Concerns for the protection of civilians are now more effectively integrated into the mandates of peacekeeping operations, as has been the case for the United Nations missions in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

113. During the reporting period, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs completed a series of high-level regional workshops with senior government officials. Those workshops were used to reflect specific regional issues in developing the agenda on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and improving Member States' understanding of their own roles and responsibilities. I am pleased to see regional organizations taking up the agenda, as manifested, for example, by the decision of the African Union to appoint a special representative for the protection of civilians in armed conflict and by the decision of ECOWAS to establish a humanitarian division to address issues related to the protection of civilians.

114. The above-mentioned initiatives have been supported by collective mechanisms within the Organization, such as the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs Implementation Group on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, which has provided a basis for strengthened coordination in this area. Closer coordination has

led to the joint development of various tools for the protection of civilians, including an updated aide-memoire reflecting the latest concerns, trends and measures to address them (adopted by the Security Council in December 2003 as an annex to presidential statement S/PRST/2003/27).

115. The serious issue of the sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children in armed conflict by personnel employed by or affiliated with the United Nations — both civilian staff and uniformed peacekeepers — has been the focus of considerable attention since my previous report. In October 2003, I issued a bulletin entitled "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13). The bulletin sets out minimum standards of behaviour expected of all United Nations personnel and measures necessary to maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Subsequently, implementation guidelines and tools were issued, and all parts of the United Nations system with field presences have begun working to ensure the coherent implementation of the bulletin at the field level.

Chapter IV

Cooperating for development

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

116. During the past year, the eight Millennium Development Goals continued to provide a unifying framework for the activities of the United Nations in the area of cooperation for development. The United Nations core strategy — research, campaigning, monitoring and reporting, and country-level operations — guided the Organization's work to achieve the Goals.

117. Although the prospects for meeting the Millennium Development Goals remain uneven, the time-bound and measurable goals are still achievable by the deadline of 2015. However, this will be possible only if developed and developing countries institute the right combination of national and international policies and implement their shared commitments, as set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus.

118. In assisting Member States to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations has adopted a holistic approach. Over the past year, the United Nations has sought to help increase the productive capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition through trade, investment, mobilization of resources and technology development. The Organization has also assisted vulnerable groups, such as those living in absolute poverty, women, children, youth, indigenous peoples, refugees, people living with HIV/AIDS and migrants.

119. The United Nations Development Group, comprising the operational agencies working on development, has been developing new policies and guidelines to improve the quality, effectiveness and coordination of programmes at the country level. The common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework permit a strategic, coherent and integrated United Nations system response to national priorities and needs within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals. In 2003, 18 United Nations country teams embarked on developing common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, with 18 more following in 2004.

120. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals continues to require considerable outreach and advocacy. The Millennium Campaign is raising broad-based popular support for the Goals, by working with constituencies in the industrialized countries to gather political momentum behind the eighth Goal, which calls for increased aid, meaningful debt relief and expanded access to trade and technology. In 2003, the Campaign began supporting national campaigns in developing countries, in collaboration with civil society networks.

121. The Millennium Project brings together more than 150 policy experts, development practitioners and top scholars from around the world to research alternative approaches for achieving the Goals. Looking ahead to the 2005 review of the Millennium Declaration, the Project is now working with Governments, international financial institutions and other partners to conduct a series of country-level pilot projects that will look at what each country needs in terms of policies, resources and economic growth to achieve the Goals.

122. As the General Assembly has recognized, effective monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the Goals requires operational and sustainable statistical systems. Sound, reliable and comparable statistical data are indispensable for the formulation and implementation of policies to achieve the Goals. Numerous entities of the system, notably the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, under the guidance of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goal Indicators, have contributed to improving data quality. The Department organized workshops for national statistical capacity-building in 2003. To strengthen tracking of the Goals at the country level, the United Nations Development Group is piloting the roll-out of the DevInfo software, which was in use by 42 national statistical offices in 2003 and is being introduced in another 120 countries in 2004.

123. Science and technology are critical elements in promoting economic and social development to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Many developing countries are unlikely to meet the Goals without a clear political commitment to make science and technology a top priority. Emerging issues include access and connectivity to information and communication technologies and biotechnology, as well as technology transfer and capacity-building. Most entities of the Organization have undertaken work on information and communication technologies and have contributed to the preparatory process of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society and to the Summit itself. The Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development have played a significant role in disseminating knowledge and sharing information in the field of information and communication technologies for development.

124. Over the past year, the Organization has continued to address the challenge of building national administrative capacity in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration identified new trends in and opportunities for revitalizing public administration and governance systems to meet the Goals. The *World Public Sector Report 2003: E-Government at the Crossroads* highlighted the power of information and communication technologies and their use in complex environments. Analytical tools and training materials were developed in the field of capacity-building for conflict management.

125. With regard to the goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, the International Fund for Agricultural Development focused on three key measures to reduce poverty in rural areas: strengthening the capacity of the rural poor and their organizations, improving equitable access to productive natural resources and technology and increasing access to financial services and markets. In 2003, IFAD approved 25 new rural development projects, for a total commitment of $403.6 million towards the achievement of those objectives. In addition, the IFAD grant programme comprised 70 grants amounting to $20.3 million.

126. Through its poverty reduction practice area, UNDP helped countries to develop poverty reduction strategies based on participatory processes, to connect the Millennium Development Goals to national budgets and to improve monitoring of the Goals. It also helped countries to explore feasible policy options and alternative views on human development and poverty reduction through broad national stakeholder consultations and to translate them into the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction strategy papers.

127. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals will reduce the incentive for people to resort to human traffickers to escape poverty. It will also contribute to durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees, who are among the most vulnerable people in the world. People fleeing conflict, human rights violations and persecution should be able to find protection and start their lives anew in a safe and welcoming environment. Jointly, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the International Organization for Migration and UNHCR are strengthening the exchange of information on migration and promoting greater policy coherence. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs contributes to the understanding of the impact of international migration by monitoring levels and trends of such migration and the policies adopted by Governments to shape those trends.

128. Activities carried out at the regional level to combat poverty included pilot projects of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to mobilize local capacity and resources and to strengthen cooperation and collective self-reliance of selected communities in Egypt, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, leading to the creation of some 1,500 new jobs. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, in its publication *Social Panorama of Latin America 2002-2003*, assessed the chances of halving extreme poverty in the region and documented the scale of undernourishment and child malnutrition as well as trends towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in those areas.

129. Investing in agriculture and rural areas, particularly in water control technology and rural infrastructure, in food-insecure countries should be the main priority in the fight against hunger. In spite of this, FAO reported that official bilateral development assistance to agriculture from donor countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development fell from $4.1 billion in 2001 to $3.8 billion in 2002. In commemorating World Food Day 2003, IFAD, FAO and WFP, together with representatives of international and national non-governmental organizations, formally declared their support for the International Alliance Against Hunger, a voluntary association of civil society organizations, social and religious movements and private sector and international organizations committed to the rapid eradication of hunger in the world. More than 50 countries — both developed and developing — have expressed their intent to form or reinforce national alliances against hunger linked to the International Alliance. Through its special programme for food security, which has now been taken up in almost 100 countries, FAO has continued to help low-income food-deficit countries to improve food security at both the national and household levels. This is being achieved through rapid increases in food production and productivity on an economically and environmentally sustainable basis and by improving people's access to food.

130. Increasingly, people living in poverty are located in urban areas. In order to "urbanize" the Millennium Development Goals, UN-Habitat has implemented partial urban inequity surveys in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Egypt, Ghana, the Philippines and Turkey. The UN-Habitat publication, *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*, presented the first-ever global estimates of slum populations.

131. Building up the indigenous private sector is essential to achieving growth and development and alleviating poverty. The Commission on the Private Sector and Development's March 2004 report, entitled *Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor*, details a range of actions that Governments, public development institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations can undertake to spur the growth of small- and medium-sized enterprises. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development provided services to enhance the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries through its Empretec programme. The programme has already been established in over 30 countries, most recently in Angola and Guyana.

132. In 2003, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization assisted some 51 countries through integrated programmes and country service frameworks for industrial development. The aim was to improve industrial governance and institutional infrastructure, strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises, upgrade technological capacity, enhance skills and access to modern technology, build trade and export capability and adopt energy-efficient and cleaner production measures.

133. With regard to achieving universal primary education, UNICEF estimates that 121 million children are still out of school — 65 million of them girls. In 2004, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization initiated a strategic review of its lead coordination role in the Education for All programme, an inter-agency initiative to help countries to achieve and sustain universal primary education of good quality by 2015, relying on the most in-depth statistical evaluation of education ever undertaken on a global scale and covering 180 countries. Among other things, UNESCO is examining ways to advance the monitoring of progress towards the Education for All goals and ways to ensure better coordination among instruments of development cooperation for the programme at the global and country levels. The Education for All Observatory at the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in Montreal continued to provide quality educational data and statistics to help guide decision makers and monitor global progress in achieving Education for All.

134. Efforts to promote gender equality and empower women continued to be an important aspect of the work of the Organization over the past year. The Regional Symposium on Mainstreaming Gender into Economic Policies (Geneva, January 2004), organized jointly by the Economic Commission for Europe and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, provided an opportunity for exchanging experiences and good practices in selected areas of economic policy. Concrete achievements at the country level, with assistance from United Nations entities, include a growing number of government development professionals trained in gender issues and analysis, more statistical registers with gender-disaggregated data and the progressive inclusion of gender considerations in national poverty reduction strategies and budgets.

135. Progress was achieved in support of major legal instruments, for which Member States received technical cooperation from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other entities. The number of States ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women increased by 3 to reach 177 States parties, and ratifications of the Optional Protocol to the Convention increased by 9 to reach 60 States parties.

136. On reducing child mortality the traditional focus of UNICEF on child survival was strengthened, especially in areas with high mortality rates. Important advances were achieved in the global partnerships against polio and measles, in the development of policies for orphaned children and AIDS prevention and in increasing national focus on child protection issues. UNICEF and its partners are working to ensure the best possible start in life for children and to reduce infant mortality, but this and the other Millennium Development Goals can be achieved only when the needs of children and women are given universal priority.

137. Throughout 2003, in programme design and implementation and in policy dialogue, including dialogue on poverty-reduction strategies, the United Nations Population Fund focused attention on concrete programmes and interventions that linked population dynamics and reproductive health issues, particularly maternal health, to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. WHO assisted countries with especially high rates of maternal death to strengthen their health systems to build a "continuum" of care so that all women and their babies can go through pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period safely, irrespective of their ability to pay for health services. Such a continuum includes the development of human resources for health; the availability, access, use and quality of services; building the capacity of women, families and the community; and creating collaborative links with other key primary health care programmes.

138. On establishing global partnerships for development, implementing the Monterrey Consensus adopted at the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development remains critical for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. As envisaged in the Consensus, on 26 April 2004 the Economic and Social Council held its second high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. The summary by the President of the Council (A/59/92-E/2004/73) included a number of recommendations to advance the implementation of the policy commitments set out in the Monterrey Consensus.

139. In my view, increased and more equitable world trade holds forth the prospect of helping nations to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations regional commissions provide research and technical assistance programmes focused on enhancing the capacity of their member States to integrate more effectively into the regional and world economy through sustained trade and investment.

140. The conclusion of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of WTO (Cancún, Mexico, September 2003) without substantive results was a major setback, affecting the prospects for concluding the Doha Round of trade negotiations on time. Since then, a framework agreement reached on 31 July 2004 has put the Doha Round back on track. Developing countries continue to receive support from UNCTAD and the regional commissions in those negotiations. Key challenges relate to addressing the core market access agenda of agriculture, non-agricultural products and services and fully integrating the needs and interests of developing countries concerning implementation issues and special and differential treatment.

141. The UNCTAD *Trade and Development Report 2003* examined the developmental implications of new trends in the international pattern of production and investment and made a number of proposals to enhance development strategies and macroeconomic policies in developing countries. The UNCTAD *World Investment Report 2003* focused particularly on the role of national policies and

international investment agreements in attracting and benefiting from foreign direct investment. The investment policy reviews and related advisory services provided by UNCTAD helped countries to improve policies and institutions dealing with foreign direct investment and to increase their capacity to attract and benefit from it. During 2003 and the first part of 2004, UNCTAD completed investment policy reviews for Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Nepal and Sri Lanka. In collaboration with WTO, UNCTAD assisted developing countries in their negotiations on international investment arrangements, including bilateral investment treaties and double taxation treaties.

Fighting HIV/AIDS

142. The scale and destructive impact of HIV/AIDS places this pandemic at the top of the international agenda as a serious health and development issue. With dedicated efforts by social, political and religious leaders, countries such as Brazil, Cambodia, Senegal, Thailand and Uganda have seen or are beginning to see a decline in infection rates. I wish, however, to reiterate my concern, expressed in my report on progress achieved towards implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, that few countries will meet the goals set in 2001 at the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS unless resources and efforts at all levels are increased dramatically.

143. I am happy to report that overall, agencies of the United Nations have increasingly recognized the need to strengthen and better coordinate their efforts at the country level. In 2003, WFP became the ninth co-sponsoring organization of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, joining ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNFPA, WHO and the World Bank. The United Nations Development Group has issued new policy guidelines for resident coordinators and United Nations country teams on strengthening the response to HIV/AIDS at the country level and ensuring a unified United Nations policy and programme support. The executive heads of the co-sponsoring agencies of UNAIDS met in March 2004 in Zambia, where they underlined their commitment to coordinated action and enhanced response at the country level and endorsed a new global initiative on preventive education.

144. Globally, the number of women living with HIV now equals the number of men. In sub-Saharan Africa, women now represent 58 per cent of all HIV-infected people. This feminization of the HIV/AIDS epidemic demands an urgent response. In this respect, I welcome the launching in February 2004 by UNAIDS of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, which brings together a wide range of individuals and organizations under a steering committee of some 25 high-level leaders representing Governments, activist groups, United Nations agencies and academic institutions and chaired by the Executive Director of UNFPA.

145. UNESCO and UNAIDS are undertaking a participatory joint initiative to empower young people and youth organizations to take action against HIV/AIDS and related discrimination and intolerance in their communities. In 2003, a series of training workshops were held for young people in Africa and the Arab region, and small grants were provided for national and local-level youth initiatives in Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and Zambia.

146. As part of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategy linking prevention, treatment, care and support for people living with the virus, WHO declared a global treatment emergency in 2003 and launched an initiative to treat 3 million people in developing countries with antiretroviral drugs by the end of 2005.

147. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs convened a training workshop on HIV/AIDS and adult mortality in developing countries for African specialists in September 2003, which provided a solid understanding of the broad demographic aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Department also issued a report entitled "*The impact of AIDS*", which documented the massive impact of HIV/AIDS on all sectors of society.

148. The United Nations Development Programme helped countries to mainstream the HIV/AIDS issue and implement responses to the epidemic. UNDP launched the Southern Africa capacity initiative to strengthen the capacity for health care, education and agriculture in the subregion most affected by HIV/AIDS.

149. The programme expenditures of UNICEF on HIV/AIDS have risen rapidly, from $67 million in 2001 to $111 million in 2003. All UNICEF country offices remained involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS, regardless of the current level of incidence of the disease. The UNICEF supply operation helped more than 40 Governments procure antiretroviral drugs and diagnostic equipment.

150. In more than 140 countries, UNFPA contributed to the prevention of HIV/AIDS as part of promoting reproductive health and rights and gender equality through a strategy focused on preventing HIV infection among young people and pregnant women as well as on comprehensive condom-related programming addressing demand, a supportive environment and supply.

151. In 2003, WFP undertook HIV/AIDS interventions in 41 out of the 82 countries in which it operates, including 22 of the 25 countries in the world with the highest prevalence of HIV. Its evolving programming and analytical tools for vulnerability mapping are helping stakeholders to understand and address the links between HIV/AIDS and food insecurity.

152. Refugees with HIV/AIDS face particularly difficult circumstances in locations without sufficient access to adequate health care and social services. In December 2003, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee issued *Guidelines for HIV/AIDS Interventions in Emergency Settings* to address this challenge. The Guidelines serve to help concerned Governments and the international community deliver a comprehensive response to refugees with HIV/AIDS. The Guidelines recognize that during conflict situations, the combined effects of instability, poverty and social dislocation increase the vulnerability of displaced persons to HIV/AIDS. In such circumstances, women and children are particularly at risk, as they can be forced into having sexual relations in order to gain access to basic needs such as food, water or even security.

153. In 2003, UN-Habitat designed an HIV/AIDS orphan shelter programme and completed baseline surveys of the severe orphan situation in the urban slums of Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

154. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime continued to assist Governments in the implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmes for injecting drug users through technical assistance projects, capacity-building, guidance on policy and programme development and monitoring and evaluation, particularly in Eastern Europe and Central, South and South-East Asia.

155. Over the past year, ILO continued to focus on strengthening the capacity of its constituents to contribute to national efforts against HIV/AIDS. ILO sought to ensure that national AIDS plans included the world of work and that labour policy and legislation addressed the implications of HIV/AIDS.

156. The media remains an underutilized sector and resource in the fight against HIV/AIDS. To date, the media have been seen largely as a means of distribution, but have rarely been engaged as a true partner. Therefore, in January of this year, I convened a historic meeting of the leaders of the world's major media companies to focus on what they can contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS, the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Department of Public Information are carrying this initiative forward.

Sustainable development

157. Since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, August and September 2002), Member States have emphasized the need to achieve progress in implementing time-bound goals, targets and commitments in sustainable development. This focus on implementation has propelled the Organization's work in support of sustainable development, including through support for capacity-building at the country level.

158. In April 2004, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development held its first substantive review of progress on the targets set at the World Summit. The thematic focus of the session was water, sanitation and human settlements, reflecting the priority Member States attached to those issues. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided full support to the Commission, assisting it in introducing innovations into the intergovernmental deliberative process to carry out an in-depth review of the three themes, in conjunction with cross-cutting issues. The Partnerships Fair organized during the session showcased some 80 partnership initiatives, providing a timely opportunity for reviewing progress, sharing experiences and networking among partners. At its twelfth session, attended by more than 100 ministers holding a broad range of portfolios, the Commission identified continuing technical and policy challenges in the area of access to safe drinking water, including effective water sector management, infrastructure investment, regulatory frameworks and local governance; in the area of sanitation, including the need to raise its political profile and funding for it; and in the area of human settlements, including the need for secure property tenure for the poor and legal recognition of women's right to property and inheritance.

159. The General Assembly, in its resolution 58/217 of 23 December 2003, proclaimed the period from 2005 to 2015 the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", to commence on World Water Day, 22 March 2005. I consider water and its linkages to health, poverty reduction, gender equality, education, environmental protection and peace crucial to sustainable development. Water and its related issues need greater prominence, both globally and locally. Accordingly, I established an Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, chaired by former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan and including other eminent personalities with expertise in the field, in order to raise awareness and help mobilize resources for water and sanitation programmes.

160. Through its energy and environment practice area, UNDP promoted the integration of environmental resource management with poverty reduction efforts. UNDP helped countries to strengthen their capacity to address those challenges at the global, national and community levels, seeking out and sharing best practices, providing innovative policy advice and linking partners through pilot projects that help poor people to build sustainable livelihoods.

161. The Governing Council and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme identified in March 2004 workable approaches for expediting the Millennium Development Goals and the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. They addressed goals related to the environmental aspects of water, sanitation, human settlements and the centrality of ecosystem approaches in water management, as well as environmental threats to small island developing States.

162. Over the past year, several environmental instruments have entered into force: the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Although there has been real progress in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, biodiversity itself continues to be lost at an alarming rate. In February 2004, Governments agreed on a more quantitative approach to significantly reducing the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

163. UNEP also continued to foster partnerships for sustainable development, such as the Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development initiative, launched early in 2004. The initiative, a joint undertaking of UNDP, UNEP, the Stakeholder Forum and the World Conservation Union and supported by the Global Compact, advances new local partnerships in support of the Millennium Development Goals by building the capacity of nascent entrepreneurial partnerships, creating a conduit for investment in partnerships, disseminating good practices and lessons learned and generating evidence-based research to assist policy makers.

164. The first Economic Commission for Europe Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development, held in January 2004, assessed the water, sanitation, and human settlements situation in the ECE region. ECE also initiated a second round of environmental performance reviews for countries with economies in transition, focusing on sustainable development. Two protocols to the ECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution entered into force in 2003: the 1998 Protocol on Heavy Metals and the 1998 Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The UNDP environmental governance programme initiated regional and cross-border initiatives in Eastern and Central Europe to improve economic opportunities in specific regions while supporting conservation and sustainable management of the region's natural resources.

165. The region served by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia suffers from the inefficient use and resulting scarcity of water resources. ESCWA established the Arab Integrated Water Resources Management Network to support research and training institutes for knowledge-sharing and initiated regional cooperation in the management of shared groundwater resources among the member countries. In the energy sector, ESCWA also initiated regional cooperation to promote cross-border energy trade. With the assistance of ESCWA, Egypt, Jordan,

Qatar, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen adopted new policies on energy pricing and efficiency, codes and standards and promoted the use of efficient appliances in the electric power sector and renewable electricity systems.

166. The environmental management programmes of UNIDO helped countries to address problems of industrial growth, including global warming, water and air pollution, releases of persistent organic pollutants and other toxic substances, land degradation and coastal erosion. UNIDO sought to mitigate those threats by promoting both pre-emptive measures, including the use of cleaner production technologies, and ex post measures, including end-of-pipe treatment of pollutants and other environmental clean-up measures.

167. As the lead agency for the promotion of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO prepared a draft international implementation scheme in close consultation with partners from the United Nations, Governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society and individuals. The question is now before the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session under the agenda item entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development".

168. The United Nations Forum on Forests continued its work on promoting and facilitating the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and providing a global framework for policy implementation, coordination and development. In 2004, the Forum considered traditional and scientific forest-related knowledge, social and cultural aspects of forests and means of implementing agreements. The Forum will review the effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests and make recommendations in 2005 to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests.

169. FAO helped Member States to build up their capacity to implement Agenda 21, the multisectoral action plan that emerged from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992), and provided a neutral forum for international discussions on emerging issues and policy options in food and agriculture. FAO provided support to Member States focusing on strengthening regulatory frameworks for sustainable development; promoting participatory systems-oriented approaches in the management of fisheries, forestry, mountain regions and other natural resources; sharing good practices and policies; promoting an integrated approach to agriculture, forestry and fisheries; and supporting the use of information and communication technologies for development planning at all levels and for specific user groups and localities.

170. To promote sustainable urbanization, UN-Habitat launched the Managing Water for African Cities initiative at the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (Addis Ababa, December 2003) and also established a water and sanitation trust fund. Through the Water for Asian Cities programme, which draws upon the experience of the Managing Water for African Cities programme, UN-Habitat has established a new model for cooperation, closely linking political mobilization and capacity-building to follow-up investment in the sector by the Asian Development Bank.

171. In the field of corporate environmental accounting, UNCTAD in 2004 published *A Manual for the Preparers and Users of Eco-efficiency Indicators*, which standardizes for the first time the presentation and disclosure of a company's environmental performance.

172. A United Nations University study alerted the world to the growing negative environmental impacts of computers. The average 24-kilogram desktop computer with a monitor requires at least 10 times its weight in fossil fuels and chemicals to manufacture, making it five times more materials-intensive than an automobile or refrigerator. The material- and energy-intensive production process, greater adoption of personal computers worldwide and the rapid rate at which they are discarded for newer machines add to resource depletion and environmental pollution. Government incentives are needed worldwide to extend the life of personal computers and to slow the growth of high-tech pollution.

173. To build national capacity for sustainable development, the ILO International Training Centre, based in Turin, Italy, conducted some 700 training activities for 16,000 participants from 177 countries. Some 45 per cent of those activities took place in Turin, 50 per cent in the field and 5 per cent online.

Africa

174. In response to the high priority I have assigned in United Nations reform efforts to addressing the special needs of Africa, all parts of the Organization provided support for African development over the past year. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has been established and provides support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development through its reporting, advocacy and analytical work. The Office continues to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of my 1998 report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318). In my progress report submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session (A/58/352), I noted that while further progress had been made in the implementation of the recommendations in the past year, such progress had been slow and uneven. It concluded that African countries and the international community needed to accelerate their efforts to implement my recommendations.

175. To promote technical cooperation for the implementation of NEPAD, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in 2004 published *South-South Cooperation in Support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Experiences of Africa-Latin America and the Caribbean*, which examines the depth and diversity of South-South cooperation between the two regions and assesses the congruence between NEPAD priorities and existing areas of cooperation.

176. I have also appointed an independent panel of eminent persons to review and assess the scope and adequacy of international support for NEPAD, to conduct a dialogue with Africa's development partners with a view to promoting support for NEPAD and to make recommendations to me on action the international community could take to enhance support for the implementation of NEPAD and for the development of Africa. The panel is to begin its work in September 2004. The NEPAD secretariat has received institutional, technical and financial support from UNDP.

177. The prospects for peace in Africa may help to facilitate the return of millions of displaced persons. As part of integrated United Nations efforts in support of the NEPAD peace and security programme, UNHCR focuses on holistic post-conflict and recovery programmes in transition countries.

178. In November 2003 WFP signed a memorandum of understanding with NEPAD, the focus areas of which included food security, livelihood protection, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, emergency needs assessment, preparedness and response and regional capacity-building. Nearly half, or 46 per cent, of the Programme's development resources were invested in sub-Saharan Africa.

179. UNEP assisted African Governments in developing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The African Union held a donor partners' conference (Algiers, December 2003), at which the Algiers Declaration for a Global Partnership on the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was adopted, recognizing the importance for the initiative of international assistance and national capacity-building and committing all partners and stakeholders to support the implementation phase of the Action Plan.

180. FAO has provided support to Member States in Africa in capacity-building, technical assistance and the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and strategies (e.g., in Eritrea, Mozambique, Nigeria, Swaziland, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania), as well as in the formulation of regional programmes for food security and support for regional economic organizations. FAO has also assisted in the review and updating of national strategies for food security and agricultural development for the implementation of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. For least developed countries in Africa, UNIDO has launched the African Productive Capacity Initiative, to be implemented in the framework of NEPAD, with the objectives of increasing the share of manufactured products and services in national income, creating environmentally friendly productive entities and generating sustainable jobs.

181. Jointly with the Government of Japan, the United Nations organized in September 2003 the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. As a follow up, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa is assisting United Nations country teams in the preparation of projects for funding from the Japanese Trust Fund for Human Security.

182. I welcome the Economic and Social Council's initiative to assert its role in African countries emerging from conflict through the work of its ad hoc advisory groups on Burundi and Guinea-Bissau. They presented their recommendations to the Council in February 2004. The groups have called for partnerships between the authorities of the two countries and the international community and have contributed to mobilizing donor support in the critical phase of the transition from relief to development. In this context, working relationships between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council have been enhanced, as exemplified by joint missions to Guinea-Bissau, thus contributing to promoting a comprehensive approach to peace and development, as called for in the Millennium Declaration.

183. In 2003, the strategy of UNDP for contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa sought to strengthen awareness of the Goals, to strengthen the capacity of African countries for monitoring progress towards the Goals; and to put the Goals into effect at the country level. UNDP

organized two subregional Millennium Development Goals forums, for West Africa and Southern Africa, which reinforced the country-level campaigns and rekindled commitment to the Goals. Various governance programmes helped to create an enabling environment for the Goals and to strengthen political commitment to their achievement. UNDP also supported the efforts of many countries in Africa to incorporate the Goals in their medium- to long-term national poverty reduction strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers.

184. The Global Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles has also made substantial progress. The Partnership, focusing on sub-Saharan Africa and coordinated by UNEP, was set up to support the global phase-out of leaded gasoline as part of a commitment made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. At a conference held at UNEP headquarters in May 2004, it was reported that over half of all petrol sold in sub-Saharan Africa was now unleaded, a dramatic increase since 2001, when virtually all petrol sold was leaded.

185. The interventions of UNFPA in Africa focused on evidence-based policy dialogue, national capacity-building for the management of population and reproductive health programmes and data for development.

186. In 2004, 63 UN-Habitat-supported projects and programmes for urban development and management were under execution in 30 countries in Africa, addressing the formulation of national housing policies and programmes, promoting appropriate building materials and technologies, improving access by the poor to basic services and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

187. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime continued to provide capacity-building support to the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group and its 14 member States. The Office also completed operational research in Kenya, Malawi and Mauritius jointly with UNAIDS on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS linkages and appropriate prevention responses. The Office also provided African Governments with technical and advisory services to develop drug demand-reduction programmes in national policies.

188. ILO supported the African Union in preparing for the Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa, to be held in September 2004. As a result of ILO advice, a number of poverty reduction strategy papers in Africa have incorporated issues of employment, social protection, social dialogue and principles, and rights at work.

Addressing the needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

189. Developments during the past year show that the most vulnerable groups of countries remain marginalized in the global economy. The targets set by the international community to assist them, in particular with regard to halving extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, seem, on the basis of current trends, unlikely to be achieved in most cases. The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States increased its efforts to address the special needs of these three groups of countries and assisted me in ensuring coordinated follow-up of the implementation of the respective programmes of action referred to below.

190. At its high-level segment in June 2004, the Economic and Social Council adopted a ministerial declaration on resource mobilization and creation of an enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, adopted in Brussels in 2001, which renewed the call for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and again urged donor countries to provide more than 0.2 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to those countries.

191. The Brussels Programme of Action remains the most comprehensive programme addressing all the special needs of the least developed countries. The establishment of national mechanisms, including national focal points, is crucial for its implementation at the national level. As at May 2004, 47 countries had identified a national focal point and 18 national forums had been established, as compared with 11 focal points and 9 national forums a year ago. Within the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, 19 entities have now mainstreamed the Brussels Programme of Action into their activities and programmes of work. Moreover, partnerships with civil society, the private sector and intergovernmental organizations have been either initiated or strengthened.

192. The landlocked developing countries received a special boost in their efforts from the International Ministerial Conference on Transit Transport Cooperation (Almaty, Khazakstan, August 2003), which was the first United Nations conference ever to address this group's special needs. Its outcome, the Almaty Programme of Action, was the result of a participatory preparatory process involving all stakeholders, and is balanced, focused and implementable. A road map for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action has been prepared and validated through a meeting of United Nations entities and agencies, including the World Bank Group. I have invited Member States to take advantage of the United Nations annual treaty event to become party to the conventions on transit transport.

193. Regarding the needs of the third vulnerable group, the small island developing States, the Organization continued to assist Member States in implementing, through analytical and operational activities, the Barbados Programme of Action adopted at the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Bridgetown, April and May 1994). In April 2004, the Commission on Sustainable Development convened a three-day preparatory meeting on the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held in Mauritius in January 2005.

194. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States have received broad-based support from the United Nations. One of the numerous activities of UNCTAD, both analytical and operational, with regard to those countries was the publication of *The Least Developed Countries Report 2004*. The report assesses the relationship between international trade and poverty and identifies national and international policies that would make trade a more effective mechanism for poverty reduction in the least developed countries. The Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries, consisting of six agencies — the International Monetary Fund, the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization — continued to support the least developed countries in their capacity development for trade. In January 2004, FAO issued a

paper on FAO and the small island developing States: challenges and emerging issues in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

195. WFP dedicated 71 per cent of its development resources to the least developed countries and 99 per cent to low-income-food-deficit countries. Similarly, UNFPA devoted most of its resources and programme efforts to least developed countries and small island developing States, in particular those whose population and social development indicators fell considerably short of internationally agreed standards. UN-Habitat continued to carry out capacity-building programmes in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States through its various programmes and its regional offices. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, jointly with the Commonwealth Secretariat, continued to provide technical assistance to several Pacific island States identified as international financial centres at high risk for money-laundering.

196. At the regional level, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in its panel discussion on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the least developed countries through regional development cooperation, held at its sixtieth session (Shanghai, China, April 2004), highlighted the modalities of regional development cooperation required to ensure socio-economic progress in the least developed countries. A Pacific regional workshop on urban management (Nadi, Fiji, December 2003), organized jointly by ESCAP, UN-Habitat, UNDP and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, resulted in a draft Pacific Urban Agenda, which was adopted by ESCAP. ESCAP also convened the eighth session of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries in April 2004, which arrived at a set of recommendations in regard to experiences and challenges in urban management issues in Pacific island countries. As a follow-up to the Almaty conference, the Economic Commission for Europe initiated the promotion of accession to the ECE legal instruments on transport by least developed countries, and together with ESCAP convened the first Expert Group Meeting on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages in March 2004, covering landlocked and transit developing countries as well as transition countries in the Euro-Asian region.

Chapter V

International legal order and human rights

Human rights development

197. As I stated in my report of September 2002 entitled "strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change", building strong human rights institutions at the country level is what, in the long run, will ensure that human rights are protected and advanced in a sustained manner. In follow-up, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Group and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs have developed and adopted a joint plan of action for the period 2004-2006 designed to strengthen human rights-related United Nations action at the country level. The focus of the plan is to improve the capacity of United Nations country teams to assist Member States, at their request, in their efforts to establish and operate national human rights promotion and protection systems. Measures are being developed in the areas of needs assessment and planning, training and facilitating closer linkages between national systems and the international human rights mechanisms. The plan also includes the development of appropriate methodological tools and resource materials for use by country teams, national authorities and civil society. Specific projects are aimed at enhancing the role of national courts in human rights protection.

198. Human rights advisers have been assigned to a number of country teams. This relatively new concept has proven to be an effective way to develop human rights capacity and to support the human rights elements of peace processes as well as in conflict or post-conflict situations. OHCHR currently maintains field presences in more than 40 countries and manages some 40 technical cooperation projects and programmes in all parts of the world. Moreover, to alleviate the causes of violence and related human rights violations, as well as to combat impunity, which, if left unaddressed, can reverse or halt progress, OHCHR has been called upon to coordinate or carry out investigations into major human rights violations.

199. Progress in the protection of human rights depends on the strength of the international legal framework. It is heartening to note that the number of ratifications of international human rights treaties has continued to increase, moving us closer to achieving one of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. I would like to make a special reference to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the States parties to which met for the first time on 11 December 2003 to elect the 10 members of the Committee monitoring the implementation of the Convention. The Committee held its first session from 1 to 5 March 2004 at the United Nations Office at Geneva. I am convinced that the Committee has an essential role to play in a neglected area and hope that States Members of the United Nations will make every possible effort to accede to or ratify this important instrument, as well as all other fundamental international human rights treaties.

200. The work of the expert bodies established under the human rights treaties continues to be of critical importance. From the date of my last report until 1 June 2004, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the

Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee against Torture have considered the reports of 87 States parties and adopted four general comments that clarify the meaning of the treaties and offer practical advice on their implementation. The treaty bodies have continued to harmonize their working methods and to consider means to assist States parties to fulfil their substantive commitments and meet their reporting obligations. OHCHR has developed guidelines for an expanded core document designed to streamline the reporting process for the consideration of treaty bodies.

201. The petitions procedures operating under a number of international human rights treaties offer valuable opportunities for individuals directly to seek redress for alleged violations of their rights. Over the past year, expert bodies have adopted well over 100 decisions and views on individual cases.

202. The special rapporteurs and experts (mandate holders) appointed by the Commission on Human Rights have continued to make valuable contributions to the protection of fundamental rights. Over the past year, some 90 reports submitted to the Commission by the mandate holders — as well as more than 20 reports submitted to the General Assembly — have touched upon numerous human rights themes, reminding the international community of the need to uphold domestic and international human rights standards. The mandate holders have visited more than 40 countries in the framework of their fact-finding activities. Through their numerous confidential urgent appeals and other communications to some 164 countries, the mandate holders have contributed to keeping the concerned Governments aware of the need to conform in practice with international human rights norms and standards. Those communications sought the protection of individuals whose rights had allegedly been violated with no due process of law or, more generally, drew attention to global phenomena and developments threatening the full enjoyment of human rights.

203. In addition, the Commission established new thematic mechanisms on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and on impunity. On the latter issue, the Commission asked me to appoint an independent expert to update the 1997 Set of Principles for the protection and promotion of human rights through action to combat impunity. The newly established Special Rapporteur on trafficking is to focus on the human rights aspects of the victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. New special procedures mechanisms were also established by the Commission for Belarus, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and Uzbekistan.

204. At its sixtieth session, the Commission on Human Rights commemorated the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. I attended this important meeting, at which I announced my Plan of Action to Prevent Genocide, in particular my intention to appoint a Senior Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide to work closely with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations system to ensure that we are better equipped to anticipate and prevent such horrors in the future. On 12 July, I informed the Security Council of my intention to appoint Juan Méndez to this position.

205. This year the Commission on Human Rights attracted almost 5,000 participants, including representatives of Member States, non-governmental organizations, independent experts, United Nations agencies and national human rights institutions. A total of 82 senior government officials, primarily foreign and

justice ministers, attended the high-level segment opening the Commission, a significant increase over the previous year. Despite broad participation, however, there continues to be disquiet over the fact that a number of Governments accused of gross violations of human rights are elected to membership in the Commission, about the high level of politicization of the Commission's debates and about the lack of consideration of certain situations involving grave human rights violations.

206. On 1 July 2004, Louise Arbour took up her responsibilities as High Commissioner following the General Assembly's endorsement of my decision to appoint her to that post. For the past year, the Office of the High Commissioner has been ably led by Bertrand Ramcharan, following the tragic death on 19 August 2003 of Sergio Vieira de Mello, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and my Special Representative in Iraq, who was killed, along with 21 colleagues, in a terrorist attack on the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad. I take this opportunity to put on record the remarkable contribution that Mr. Vieira de Mello made to the principles and purposes of the United Nations throughout his long career as an outstanding international civil servant.

International Criminal Court

207. The International Criminal Court is now operational in The Hague. The United Nations is proud to have played an important role in its establishment and in making arrangements for the commencement of its operations. As at 31 December 2003, the United Nations Secretariat ceased to act as the secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties.

208. The second session of the Assembly of States Parties was held in September 2003. The Assembly elected the Deputy Prosecutor, the Board of Directors of the Victims Trust Fund and the remaining members of the Committee on Budget and Finance. It adopted the staff regulations of the Court as well as the 2004 budget, which signals that the Court may soon begin to carry out its judicial functions. The Assembly also established its own secretariat and a trust fund for the participation of least developed countries in its activities.

209. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/79 of 9 December 2003, the United Nations Secretariat has assisted in the orderly and smooth transition of work to the secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties. In accordance with the same resolution, I have also taken steps to conclude a relationship agreement to guide future cooperation between the United Nations and the Court and to facilitate the discharge of responsibilities of the two institutions under their constituent instruments. On 7 June 2004, the Acting Legal Counsel on my behalf and the Chef de Cabinet of the President of the International Criminal Court initialled the negotiated draft relationship agreement, thereby completing the negotiations at the working level. The General Assembly and the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court now must approve the agreement before it can be signed and enter into force.

210. As at 23 July 2004, 94 States were parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Although the pace of accession and ratification has slowed down, I remain confident that we can assume that the 100 mark will be reached soon. Universal participation in the Rome Statute would be an indelible contribution to the cause of justice in a world where many still commit, without

punishment, egregious crimes that numb the human conscience. It should remain the ultimate goal. Once again, I appeal to those countries which have not yet done so to consider acceding to or ratifying the Rome Statute. I was pleased that, in June 2004, the Security Council did not renew the request that it had made in previous years that in the next 12 months the International Criminal Court not commence or proceed with the investigation or prosecution of any case involving officials or personnel from a contributing State not a party to the Rome Statute in respect of acts or omissions relating to an operation authorized or established by the United Nations. This development represents a significant contribution to the efforts of the Organization to promote justice and the rule of law in international affairs.

International Tribunals

International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

211. The International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has continued to implement the completion strategy endorsed by the Security Council in its resolutions 1503 (2003) and 1534 (2004). The three trial chambers operate at full capacity, hearing six cases simultaneously and preparing to begin new cases as soon as ongoing cases are completed. On 6 April 2004, the judges amended rule 28 (A) of the Tribunal's Rules of Procedure and Evidence to comply with the Security Council's directive in its resolution 1534 (2004) that indictments concentrate on the most senior leaders suspected of being most responsible for crimes within the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

212. The Tribunal has taken an active role in preparing domestic judicial institutions in the States of the former Yugoslavia for the referral of cases from the Tribunal. The Tribunal hosted a donors' conference on 30 October 2003 that raised 15.7 million euros for the planned war crimes chamber within the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a project endorsed by the Security Council in its resolutions 1503 (2003) and 1534 (2004). The Chamber, which is being established by the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, is expected to be operational by January 2005 and, provided adequate detention facilities are available, should be able to receive cases referred by the Tribunal shortly thereafter. The Tribunal is also engaged in a number of initiatives designed to share expertise and information with the national authorities of Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro in order to facilitate the possible referral of cases to domestic jurisdictions in those States.

213. Six trials, involving a total of eight accused, are under way in the Tribunal's trial chambers. An additional 20 cases, involving 34 accused, are in the pre-trial phase. The total number of guilty pleas has risen to 18. Some of the accused pleading guilty have provided important evidence about the crimes they committed and events they witnessed. The trial chambers have rendered 14 judgements during the past year, and the Appeals Chamber has rendered 3. Four hundred and ten witnesses have testified. As at 20 July 2004, 59 persons were being detained at the Tribunal's detention facility. The Tribunal has transferred two convicted persons to Member States to serve their sentences: one to Austria and one to Norway.

214. Nearly 20 indictees, including some former high-ranking military and political officials, notably Radovan Karadžić, Ratko Mladić and Ante Gotovina, remain at large. The full cooperation of the international community, especially the States of the former Yugoslavia, remains essential in order to accomplish the Tribunal's

mandate, complete its operations on time and have a lasting impact on the rule of law in the former Yugoslavia. On 4 May 2004, the President of the Tribunal reported to the Security Council the consistent failure of Serbia and Montenegro to comply with its obligations under article 29 of the Tribunal's Statute and rule 39 of its Rules of Procedure and Evidence. That report stated that the level of Serbia and Montenegro's cooperation with the Tribunal had started to fall off after the December 2003 elections in that country and had now reached the point where it was almost non-existent.

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

215. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has worked to achieve the goals set out in Security Council resolution 1503 (2003), in which the Council urges it to complete investigations by 2004, trials by 2008 and appeals by 2010. The Tribunal has now rendered 17 judgements involving 23 accused. The trials of 19 accused are under way at different stages. The judicial capacity of the trial chambers was increased following the Security Council's grant of ad litem judges, nine of whom can now operate at any given time. Additional measures have been taken to streamline the judicial process. So, for example, a Trial Committee, composed of representatives of the Chambers, the Prosecution and the Registry, is now in place and is responsible for planning and streamlining pre-trial proceedings so as to ensure that cases are ready for trial on schedule.

216. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1503 (2003), a separate position of Prosecutor was established for the Tribunal. The Prosecutor has reviewed the cases and determined which should be pursued before the Tribunal and which could be transferred to national jurisdictions for prosecution. Concrete steps are now being taken to assess the suitability of some national systems, including that of Rwanda, to adjudicate cases in compliance with international standards.

217. The Registry continues to provide support to the other organs to facilitate their work. Reform of the legal aid system is under way in order to control unnecessary or excessive defence fees. The Registrar has signed agreements on the enforcement of sentences with France, Italy and Sweden, and is working towards the early conclusion of similar agreements with other countries, including Rwanda.

Special Court for Sierra Leone

218. In the past year the Special Court for Sierra Leone has continued to lay the groundwork for the start of trials of those alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for the atrocities committed during the conflict in that country. On 16 September 2003, the Special Court issued its latest indictment and arrest warrant against Santigie Borbor Kanu, who was arrested while in the custody of the authorities of Sierra Leone awaiting trial for treason and transferred to the detention facility of the Special Court. To date, the Special Court has approved 13 indictments. On 5 December 2003, the Prosecutor withdrew the indictments against Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie in view of their deaths. Two indictees, Johnny Paul Koroma and Charles Taylor, remain at large, and nine are detained in the custody of the Special Court, all of whom have pleaded not guilty.

219. On 28 January 2004, the trial chamber issued decisions as a result of which three trials, instead of nine separate ones, will be held involving the nine accused who are currently in the custody of the Court. The trials in the cases of the Civil

Defence Forces and the Revolutionary United Front started on 3 June and 5 July 2004 respectively. The trial in the case of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council is expected to start in the autumn of 2004, when a second trial chamber will be appointed.

220. The Special Court's progress has been achieved against constant funding insecurity and fiscal constraints. The funding requirement of $19 million for the first year of operation (July 2002-June 2003) were met entirely through voluntary contributions. However, during the past year it has become apparent that pledges and contributions from a group of interested States would not be sufficient to fund operations for the minimum three-year timeline, which I had previously indicated as being necessary for the investigation, prosecution and trial of a very limited number of accused. As a result of the continuing funding uncertainty, in March 2004 I sought a subvention from the General Assembly of $40 million for completion of the Court's work — $16.7 million for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004 and the remaining $23.3 million for 2005. By its resolution 58/284 of 8 April 2004, the General Assembly authorized a subvention of up to $16.7 million from the regular budget appropriations for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004. I will report to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the status of this subvention and seek approval for release of the balance.

221. After only two years of operation, the Special Court is already preparing for the post-trial phase by working on its completion and exit strategies. These will include winding down its core activities, devising mechanisms to continue necessary residual activities and leaving behind a legacy of accountability for violations of international humanitarian law. In addition, it is hoped that there will be a contribution to legal reform efforts in Sierra Leone through the dissemination of information regarding the Special Court's work and the transfer of expertise, equipment and facilities to the local legal community.

Enhancing the rule of law

222. On 24 September 2003, the Security Council held its first general consideration of the topic of justice and the rule of law. In a statement to the Council, I shared a number of lessons that the Secretariat has learned from its experience over the years in dealing with post-conflict situations and trying to help rebuild shattered societies. Foremost among those was that we must make the rule of law and justice central objectives of our peace operations, for when people do not feel safe from crime or confident that past injustices are being redressed, they will lose faith in a peace process and that process will ultimately fail. As far as re-establishing the rule of law is concerned, I noted that we cannot focus, as we sometimes have in the past, solely on rebuilding law enforcement institutions. Instead, we must take a comprehensive approach that encompasses the entire criminal justice process — police, prosecutors, defence lawyers, judges, court administrators and prison officers. A second major lesson I recalled was the need to avoid a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Rather, we must tailor solutions to local circumstances and traditions. We must also resist the temptation to think that we know best, but must involve local actors from the start and try to help them to find their own solutions. As for the pursuit of justice, I identified two major challenges. First, there is a need to look beyond questions of individual responsibility for serious crimes and to give greater consideration to meeting the needs both of victims and of the wider societies from which they come.

This may mean that we will need, on occasion, to supplement criminal trials with other mechanisms, such as truth commissions, commissions of inquiry and reparation programmes. The second major challenge is how to resolve the demands of justice and of reconciliation when they compete. As I noted, the relentless pursuit of justice may at times be an obstacle to peace, making it difficult to reach an agreement that will stop the bloodshed or placing a delicate and hard-won peace agreement in peril. That might mean that we sometimes must accept less than perfect justice or will need to devise alternatives to prosecutions, such as truth and reconciliation processes, or will have to put off the day when we bring the guilty to trial. At other times we might need simply to accept the risk to peace in the hope that, in the long term, a peace that is founded in justice will be more secure and likely to endure.

223. In August 2004, I submitted a report to the Security Council identifying a number of further practical lessons that we in the Secretariat have learned in this field which the Council might apply and build upon in its future work. Central among those were a number of precepts or ground rules that I suggested the Organization should adhere to when negotiating peace agreements and adopting mandates for its operations. Among them were the need to reject any amnesty for genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity and ensure that any amnesty already granted for those crimes is not a bar to prosecution before any court created or assisted by the United Nations; to avoid establishing or participating directly in any tribunal that can impose capital punishment; to ensure that all courts created or assisted by the United Nations are structured and organized in a way that will ensure that the process of prosecution and trial is credible, that it complies with established international standards regarding the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, the effectiveness, impartiality and fairness of prosecutors and the integrity of the judicial process; to consider, where mixed tribunals are envisaged and there are no clear guarantees regarding the real and perceived objectivity, impartiality and fairness of the national judiciary, insisting on a majority of international judges and an international prosecutor; to recognize and respect the rights of victims and ensure that relevant processes include specific measures for their participation and protection; to recognize and respond to the differential impact of conflicts and international crimes on women; and to ensure that initiatives for the restoration of the rule of law and transitional justice mechanisms are adequately resourced through viable and sustainable funding mechanisms, including, where United Nations-sponsored tribunals are involved, at least partial funding through assessed contributions. I also announced my intention to instruct my Executive Committee on Peace and Security to propose concrete action on the matters discussed in my report, with a view to strengthening United Nations support for transitional justice and the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict countries.

224. In September 2003, I appointed a full-time coordinator to secure and organize the assistance that the United Nations is to provide to the Government of Cambodia under our June 2003 agreement on the establishment of extraordinary chambers within the existing courts of Cambodia for the prosecution of serious violations of Cambodian law and international law committed during the period of Democratic Kampuchea. To form a better picture of the probable requirements of the extraordinary chambers, I sent a planning mission to Phnom Penh in December 2003 and another in March 2004. As a result, agreement was reached with Cambodia on a range of key planning parameters. Suitable premises for a courtroom and accommodation for the related institutions and support services have also been identified and detailed budget estimates prepared. I shall soon be launching an appeal

to States and will be reporting in depth to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on progress achieved. Meanwhile, with a new Government in place, the Cambodian authorities have assured me that ratification of the agreement will be a priority on the agenda of the National Assembly.

225. During the past year, five new multilateral treaties were deposited with me, bringing the total number of active treaties deposited to 510. Ten treaties, related to human rights, health, transnational organized crime and the environment, entered into force. The annual treaty event that I initiated in 2000 will this year be entitled "Focus 2004: treaties on the protection of civilians". In March, I invited Governments to participate in the event, to be held during the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I have pledged to provide requesting States with the legal technical assistance necessary to participate in the multilateral treaty framework. The Office of Legal Affairs jointly with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research offers biannual training on treaty law and practice at Headquarters. In 2003, this training was expanded to the regional level. To enhance knowledge of the technical aspects of treaties deposited with me, a new *Handbook of Final Clauses* has been published to complement the existing *Treaty Handbook*. Contributing to the wide dissemination of treaty-related information, the United Nations Treaty Collection on the Internet provides on a daily basis the updated status of all treaties deposited with me. This site now receives over 1.7 million hits per month.

Legal affairs

226. The International Law Commission completed its first reading of draft articles on diplomatic protection and advanced its work on reservations to treaties. It also made progress on the other topics on its agenda, including international liability in case of loss from transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities; responsibility of international organizations; shared natural resources; unilateral acts of States; and fragmentation of international law. The Ad Hoc Committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/210 of 17 December 1996 was reconvened and continued its efforts to elaborate a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and a draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. Meanwhile, by its resolution 58/74 of 9 December 2003, the General Assembly decided to reconvene the Ad Hoc Committee on Jurisdictional Immunities of States and Their Property with a mandate to formulate a preamble and final clauses with a view to completing a convention on jurisdictional immunities of States and their property. In March 2004, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted the text of a draft convention, which it recommended for adoption by the Assembly.

227. At its session in 2004, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law adopted a legislative guide on insolvency law. The objective of the guide is to assist national authorities in preparing new laws and in reviewing existing laws to establish an effective legal framework to address the financial difficulties of debtors, thereby providing market certainty and promoting economic growth and stability. The Commission is also preparing international standards in the fields of secured credit, arbitration, electronic contracting, transport and Government procurement law. In the past year, the International Trade Law Branch of the Office of Legal Affairs, which received additional resources to address an increased workload, particularly in the area of training and legal assistance, continued to assist the Commission, whose membership was increased from 36 to 60 States.

228. With respect to the law of the sea, the fifth meeting of the Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea discussed how States could better address the increasing threats to biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. In relation to the request by the General Assembly to establish a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, an international workshop was held in conjunction with the fifth meeting of the Consultative Process. This represented the first opportunity for States to discuss the practical implications of the establishment of a global marine assessment process. Inter-agency cooperation and coordination to address all these issues has been enhanced by the establishment of the Oceans and Coastal Areas Network (UN-Oceans), the general mechanism for inter-agency cooperation in ocean affairs. The date 16 November 2004 marks the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. One hundred and forty-five States are now parties to the Convention, demonstrating the considerable progress that has been made towards universal participation.

229. During the past year, the Office of Legal Affairs provided advice on legal issues arising from the situation in Iraq, including on relevant Security Council resolutions and the question of Iraq's representation in the United Nations, as well as on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, the winding-up of the oil-for-food programme and the transfer of responsibility for the programme to the Coalition Provisional Authority.

230. The Office provided procedural advice to the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, which ultimately requested the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on the legal consequences of the construction by the occupying Power of a wall in the occupied Palestinian territory. The Office prepared a dossier of relevant documents and assisted in the preparation of my written statement to the Court.

231. With respect to the International Tribunals, the Office provided advice in relation to requests for access to documentary evidence and witnesses. It also assisted the Management Committee of the Special Court for Sierra Leone on legal and operational aspects of the Court. The Office provided support to peacekeeping missions and assistance with respect to the establishment of a number of new and expanded operations, including the United Nations Mission in Liberia, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Operation in Burundi.

232. The Office also provided advice on a wide range of other matters of concern to the Organization, including personnel reform, procurement practices and guidelines on cooperation with the private sector. It continued to draft and negotiate a series of complex contracts for the capital master plan and a related security-strengthening initiative for the Headquarters complex in New York.

Chapter VI
Management

Administration and management

233. The Organization continued its efforts to improve client servicing and place a stronger emphasis on delivering results. An Organization-wide client survey of services provided by the Department of Management was carried out to establish benchmarks against which future performance can be measured. The survey revealed that while respondents viewed recent efforts to upgrade the management of services as being headed in the right direction, there was much room for improvement, particularly with respect to client focus and meeting client needs, enhanced consultation with clients in the policy-making process and flexibility in the application of policies and rules. An important development was a retreat in May 2004 that brought together all the chief administrative officers from offices away from Headquarters and senior Headquarters administrative staff. This has led to mechanisms being put in place for increased dialogue and closer collaboration in the area of administration and management.

234. Practical steps have been taken to improve high-priority administrative services. In view of increased security threats, the Organization's ability to respond quickly and effectively to crises has been enhanced by building up its capacity to deal with the needs of staff, their families and others who may be affected. The administration of justice has become more efficient through the assignment of additional resources and streamlining procedures, which has led to significant reductions in case backlogs.

Information and communication technology services

235. The information and communication technology strategy (A/57/620) to ensure efficiency, automation and coordination in the Organization's internal decision-making is being implemented, and a Project Review Committee has been established to enforce standards on all initiatives in the area of information and communication technology and to ensure that all related investments are justified. The United Nations is upgrading its global information and communication technology network to make it more robust and sufficiently powerful to support multimedia applications such as desktop videoconferencing. Network security risk assessments have been undertaken to mitigate security risks at four duty stations.

Security and safety services

236. In view of significantly increased threats to the United Nations and its staff, the Organization undertook a number of initiatives to enhance security at Headquarters and field offices. Measures in New York include the replacement of the perimeter fence and the development of an electronic access control system. The development of a system-wide standardized access control system is under way. To ensure a safe and secure working environment, risk assessment, mitigation measures and strategies in the form of Headquarters minimum operating security standards were developed and established in January 2004. All United Nations system offices at Headquarters have agreed to adhere to the standards.

237. In the wake of the attack on the United Nations office in Baghdad on 19 August 2003, the Department of Management worked very closely with the United Nations Security Coordinator, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs to compile an implementation plan to improve crisis response on the basis of lessons learned. Recommendations cover the areas of disaster preparedness and planning, formulation of clear definitions of roles and responsibilities, development of emergency procedures, creation of a full inventory of operational response capabilities, proper selection and training of crisis response personnel and dedicated follow-up on administrative matters.

238. Training programmes on security have been instituted, including one on basic security in the field, which is mandatory for all staff. Increased security awareness of staff before and during a crisis has been promoted through a hotline, a web site and an emergency preparedness booklet, and post-crisis support programmes for staff are provided by the Staff Counsellor's Office.

Common support services

239. The United Nations Global Marketplace, a common Internet-based supplier registration and database facility that is expected to become a "one-stop shop" for all United Nations-related procurement information for both procurement professionals in the Organization and the public, was launched in February 2004. The consolidation of requirements and direct negotiations with manufacturers and developers rather than the retailer have led to global arrangements, that benefit all United Nations system organizations, thus avoiding duplication of effort and providing improved volume discounts, increased control over the procurement process, elimination of non-value-added tasks and reduction of long purchase cycles. Particularly beneficial are travel-related contracts and contracts for information technology and telecommunications (software and hardware), office supplies, vehicles and security-related equipment. New office facilities are being built in Addis Ababa, Nairobi and Santiago to ensure that disparate offices are situated in one location in line with the "United Nations House" concept. In terms of security, they will conform to the new electronic access control system and the Headquarters minimum operating security standards.

Human resources management

240. Implementation of the integrated human resources management reform programme continued with human resource practices and procedures being further refined in order to meet the needs of programme managers and staff at large. Particular emphasis was given to supporting the new staff selection system, which incorporates recruitment, placement, promotion and managed mobility. Information technology tools have been leveraged with the Organization-wide roll-out of a fully electronic Performance Appraisal System (e-PAS), the further development of the electronic Human Resources Handbook and enhancements to the Galaxy tool, which supports the staff selection system. The Office of Human Resources Management continues to work in partnership with department heads in developing and monitoring human resources action plans, which set departmental goals related to, among other things, geographical distribution, gender, staff development and PAS compliance.

241. The core values and competencies have now been incorporated into all aspects of human resources management, including recruitment, performance management, career development and learning. Major emphasis has been placed on developing a culture of continuous learning, building leadership and management capacity, providing guidance for staff and managers on emergency preparedness and supporting career development and mobility for staff at all levels. Increased attention has been paid to the work-life agenda, including the design and implementation of worksite wellness programmes, further implementation of the United Nations policy on HIV/AIDS, the introduction of flexible working arrangements and the provision of expanded staff counselling and advisory services.

Capital master plan

242. The United Nations has entered into contracts for the design development phase of the refurbishment of the Headquarters complex. They cover various design services related to infrastructure, architecture and engineering, as well as measures to strengthen security. In February 2004 the United States of America, as the host country, extended a provisional offer, subject to approval by the United States Congress, of an interest-bearing loan of $1.2 billion to finance the capital master plan. Subsequently the host country proposed alternative repayment scenarios for consideration by the General Assembly. Preparatory work is moving ahead, and an architect has been selected for the design and construction of the new building south of Headquarters that would serve as alternate accommodation during the renovation phase.

Financial management

243. The results-based-budgeting framework has continued to be further refined to improve managerial accountability, including the introduction of the new two-year strategic framework to replace the medium-term plan and a redesigned programme performance report.

244. A worrisome development during the past year has been the deterioration in the financial situation of the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, with an increasing number of Member States failing to pay their assessed contributions. Unless Member States respond positively and promptly by paying their dues, the future of the Tribunals may be jeopardized.

245. The payment of regular budget contributions has also fallen behind in comparison with the previous year, with the amount unpaid at the end of 2003 totalling $441.7 million, versus $304.7 million at the end of 2002. Only 127 Member States had paid their assessed contributions in full by the end of 2003. Those developments, together with recent decisions of the General Assembly that surplus balances from closed peacekeeping missions should be returned to Member States, have severely curtailed the level of available cash. Under these circumstances, full and timely payments by Member States become even more necessary in order to not affect the mandated operations of the United Nations.

Accountability and oversight

246. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, which was created by the General Assembly in July 1994 to enhance oversight functions within the Organization. The Assembly will conduct its second five-year evaluation and review of the functions and reporting procedures of the Office at its fifty-ninth session. To assist the Assembly, the Office undertook a comprehensive internal assessment of its activities, concluding that while the quality of its activities had improved over the past five years, there was a need to strengthen coordination of oversight reports in the Secretariat to enhance the impact of recommendations and overall accountability.

Monitoring, evaluation and consulting

247. Intensive training of managers and staff carried out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services contributed to the strengthening of results-based management. The format and content of my report on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/59/69) were substantially improved to showcase the key results achieved under each programme and subprogramme of the Organization's programme budget.

248. In its evaluation of the recent restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (A/58/746), the Office of Internal Oversight Services concluded that the reform was on the right track but that more time was needed for its impact to be realized fully. Among other things, the Office recommended improving personnel management, institutionalizing best practices and implementing information management and technology objectives.

249. The Office of Internal Oversight Services continued to provide consulting services to Secretariat departments to assist them in changing their work processes and structures, including by completing a report on the integration of global management in conference services (A/59/133) and assessments of the children and armed conflict programme and the human resources reform programme.

Internal audit

250. The Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted approximately 100 audits and issued five reports to the General Assembly covering a wide range of issues, including peacekeeping operations, the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, procurement and programme management. As a result of its audit of the Headquarters Committee on Contracts, the Office of Internal Oversight Services made recommendations for improving the efficiency of the review process (A/58/294). In its report on the audit of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Tribunals for Rwanda and the Former Yugoslavia (A/58/677), which was still a joint office at the time, it recommended strengthening planning and monitoring activities and expediting the recruitment of senior officials. Two audit reports submitted to the General Assembly dealt with the administration of peacekeeping trust funds (A/58/613) and the policies and procedures for recruiting Department of Peacekeeping Operations staff (A/58/704).

Investigations

251. In September 2003, the Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services opened a new office at the United Nations Office at Vienna. Approximately 90 per cent of cases investigated by the Division are located away from Headquarters. With the move of most of the Headquarters-based investigators to the new location, the Division has been able to realize substantial cost savings and be in closer contact with many of the offices for which it conducts investigations.

252. At my request, an investigation was conducted into allegations that the United Nations had possession of a cockpit voice recorder ("black box") from the Falcon 50 aircraft that was carrying the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi when it crashed on 6 April 1994, precipitating the Rwandan genocide. A cockpit voice recorder had indeed been stored at the United Nations since 1994, but the investigation revealed that it was not from the presidential aircraft and did not contain any relevant information about the crash of that aircraft.

253. The Investigations Division is leading the Investigation Task Force in Kosovo, which was established as a result of last year's investigation into the fraudulent diversion of $4.3 million by a senior staff member of the reconstruction pillar of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (see A/58/592 and Corr.1). As a joint investigative body, the Task Force is mandated to initiate, conduct and coordinate investigations to identify fraud and corruption involving funds from the Kosovo consolidated budget. The Anti-Fraud Office of the European Union and the Financial Investigation Unit of UNMIK, composed of police from the Guardia di Finanza of Italy, are the other members of the Task Force. This initiative is being run in close collaboration with the senior management of UNMIK so that corrective action can be taken promptly.

254. On 21 April 2004, I appointed a high-level Independent Inquiry Committee to investigate allegations of impropriety in the administration and management of the oil-for-food programme in Iraq. To ensure a thorough and meticulous inquiry, the members of the Committee have access to all relevant United Nations records and information and the authority to interview all relevant officials and personnel. The Committee is authorized to obtain records and interviews from persons unaffiliated with the United Nations who may have knowledge relevant to the inquiry and to seek cooperation from Member States in the conduct of its inquiry. I was encouraged by the unanimous welcoming of the Committee's appointment by the Security Council through its resolution 1538 (2004) and its calling upon the Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq and all other Member States, including their national regulatory authorities, to cooperate fully with the inquiry.

Strengthening the Organization

255. The implementation of my agenda for further change, submitted to the General Assembly two years ago, is now largely complete. Last autumn, I submitted a progress report to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session (A/58/351), along with a number of subsidiary reports on specific reform proposals. The programme budget proposal for the biennium 2004-2005 debated by the Assembly last autumn reflected an alignment of activities of the Organization with the priorities agreed upon at the Millennium Summit and the global conferences of the 1990s. It also reflected a major reorganization of two large departments — the Department for General

Assembly and Conference Management and the Department of Public Information — and the discontinuation of a large number of reports, meetings and activities of marginal utility. In terms of resources, more than $100 million was reallocated within or between programmes and significant increases in the funds dedicated to information and communication technology and staff training were approved.

256. Reporting is one area in which measurable improvements have been made. Efforts to consolidate reports for the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly resulted in a 13 per cent reduction in the number of reports. An additional reduction of 16 per cent is proposed for the fifty-ninth session. In the area of public information, the structural changes made to the Department of Public Information are beginning to show results — with more focused attention being given to priority activities and better leveraging of technology. A single regional information hub was established in Brussels in January 2004, replacing nine under-resourced and disparate centres located throughout Western Europe. Further efforts to consolidate the network of information centres in other regions will proceed in the coming year.

257. With regard to the planning and budgeting system, a two-year strategic framework replaced the four-year medium-term plan. The first proposed strategic framework, for the period 2006-2007, will be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. In addition, processes for programme planning and resource allocation are now better aligned and the intergovernmental review process has been streamlined. The budget document for 2004-2005 was considerably shorter than in previous bienniums and was better presented. In late 2004, Member States were also expected to consider specific measures to improve the system of monitoring and evaluation, another important element in the planning and budgeting cycle.

258. The reforms introduced in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are described in some detail in chapter V, including proposed measures to strengthen national protection systems, improve treaty implementation and enhance the management of the Office. The question of strengthening support for rapporteurs and the special procedures system remains a priority policy issue. The new High Commissioner will address this and other concerns, in particular as regards the staffing of her Office, in the coming year.

259. Two major reports arising out of the 2002 reform package were completed in the past year: one that clarifies the Organization's roles and responsibilities in technical cooperation on a number of selected issues and the other reflecting the work of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations. Considerable follow-up work will be needed, particularly on the latter report, since the Panel's recommendations have important institutional and systemic implications for the United Nations. Chapter VII contains additional details on the Panel's findings and proposed next steps.

260. The funds and programmes have made further progress in strengthening their presence at the country level. Measures include the development of guidelines for joint programming and identification of lessons learned in countries emerging from conflict. Modalities for the joint management of resources, knowledge-sharing systems and strengthening of the resident coordinators are being developed.

261. A comprehensive report on the progress made to implement the 10 building blocks of the Organization's human resources strategy will be considered by the General Assembly in late 2004. Concerning specific proposals contained in the 2002 package, implementation is in progress. For example, measures to harmonize contracts and benefits for staff in the field have been developed; however, the

financial impact of those proposals is still under review. Practical measures to improve opportunities for General Service staff are being developed, within the restrictions imposed by recent resolutions of the General Assembly. A review of delegated authority has pointed to the need for more explicit guidance from the Department of Management on management and administrative functions. Better systems of monitoring are also anticipated — including the reconfiguration of the Organization's Accountability Panel — and more attention will be given to managerial training.

262. I would also like to draw attention to a recent review conducted by the General Accounting Office of the United States Government on the progress of United Nations reform. It is encouraging to note that, at the time of its review, the Office estimated that 85 per cent of the reforms proposed in the 1997 and 2002 reform packages had been either fully or partly implemented.

Chapter VII
Partnerships

Communication

263. As detailed in my previous report on the work of the Organization, the Department of Public Information has undergone a major reorganization of its priorities, structures and processes. Its new operating model is based on the premise that its role is to manage and coordinate the content of United Nations communications and to strategically convey this content to achieve the greatest public impact. Through the reorganization process, the Department has acquired the tools it needed to deliver on the challenges I set for it in my 2002 report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387 and Corr.1)". After a period of transition, initial problems with the new structures and processes have been overcome. The reformed and restructured Department now understands what is expected of it, is mastering the means to deliver on those expectations and has gained practical experience in their execution. It is ready to apply the lessons learned, as well as its new-found confidence, to further improve the products and services it offers.

264. In December 2003, through its resolution 58/101 B, the General Assembly endorsed my proposals regarding the rationalization of the network of United Nations information centres around the world and laid out a clear sequence of steps to be undertaken by the Department of Public Information to implement those proposals. The first such step was the creation of a regional United Nations information centre for Western Europe, established on 1 January 2004 in Brussels immediately following the closure of nine Western European information centres on 31 December 2003. With the establishment of this modern and adequately resourced centre, the Organization will, for the first time, be able to properly implement a robust, coherent and coordinated public information outreach programme throughout Western Europe.

265. I have asked the Department of Public Information to review the Western European experience to derive lessons that may be valuable as we continue the process of regionalization of the United Nations information centres. It is clear that the regional model that will ultimately be applied in the developing world will differ from that used in Western Europe, as the needs of each region are different. At this stage, I envisage the establishment, in consultation with Member States, of a significant number of smaller hubs in key media centres throughout the developing world, with sites chosen and resources allocated in such a way as to ensure that distance and linguistic diversity do not hamper their operations.

266. A feature of United Nations information activities over the past 12 months was the establishment of small expert groups to deal with the public information consequences of emerging crises. These groups, generally with participants from the Department of Public Information and the relevant substantive offices of the Secretariat, are guided by senior management and provide strategic advice and guidance on how we might publicly address the crises in question. Another group, composed of United Nations system information officers from the Middle East and the Arab world, held two meetings and developed a strategic plan to bolster the flagging image of the Organization in that region.

267. The importance of effective public information for the success of peacekeeping operations was underlined as the Secretariat sought to ensure that the United Nations was equipped to meet the recent dramatic surge in demand for such operations. The Department of Public Information, in fulfilling its responsibilities with regard to the public information aspects of peacekeeping, has set in place new strategies aimed at generating support for new and expanding operations among Member States, the general public and the local populations in the areas where such operations are deployed.

268. To implement the aforementioned strategies, there is an increasing need to rapidly deploy expert public information personnel to new field missions. Preliminary training of United Nations staff who could be deployed rapidly to peacekeeping missions was conducted at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi in June, under the auspices of the Department of Public Information and with funding from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I hope to continue this training to ensure that we have a full cadre of qualified staff available when needed. Training has also been provided to information staff currently serving with United Nations peacekeeping missions on ways to support specific mission priorities, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Experts from the Department of Public Information now take part, as a matter of course, in multidisciplinary assessment missions that precede the deployment of peacekeeping or political missions. In the past 12 months, assessment missions to Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia and the Sudan have benefited from input by public information officers, and a preliminary media needs-assessment mission was undertaken to Iraq.

269. A number of new techniques and activities have been employed to increase the scope of United Nations outreach. The use of external public venues for United Nations observances and commemorations has proved to be a most successful innovation, quadrupling attendance at the annual New York observance of World AIDS Day (1 December), for example.

270. Similarly, the use of multi-site videoconferences and Internet exchanges, linking students and civil society partners around the world, has boosted our capacity to encourage public dialogue on many important issues. Special web events held in the lead-up to and during the first phase of the World Summit for the Information Society (Geneva, December 2003), attracted large and enthusiastic participation from students in many countries. The annual Department of Public Information Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, which brought a record 2,000 representatives from civil society organizations from 86 countries to New York, was followed by many more interested organizations and individuals via a live webcast.

271. Another innovative means used to promote public understanding of the work of the Organization was allowing the filming on location at United Nations Headquarters of *The Interpreter*, a feature film. This decision was taken after considerable thought and discussion, and ultimately rested on the assessment that the net result would be increased awareness of the United Nations among a broad audience.

272. In an effort to focus attention on important issues that often go underreported, the Department of Public Information launched a list of "10 stories the world should hear more about". Featured on the list was the plight of child soldiers in Uganda, the crisis in the Central African Republic, developments that may lead to a new treaty on the rights of the disabled and the threat posed by overfishing to the livelihoods of 200 million people worldwide. The initiative received a positive response from United Nations offices and agencies that contributed ideas to the project and succeeded in drawing the attention of numerous news organizations both to the specific stories themselves and to the broader question of what role the media plays in raising public awareness.

273. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library employed technology to upgrade its products, with its UNBISnet catalogue now linked to the full text of all documents on the Official Document System, in all six official languages. Additional links have been provided in the index to speeches to the full text of speeches and in the voting records to the full texts of resolutions. A thorough revision of the voting records database, currently under way, is expected to be completed by the end of 2004.

274. The continuous development and improvement of the United Nations web site allows us to harness the power of the Internet towards familiarizing more people around the world with the work of our Organization and issues of common concern. In 2003 the site recorded over 2,100 million hits, compared to 1,695 million hits in 2002. On an average day, over 940,000 pages are viewed by users. Substantial increases in visits to the various language sites were also recorded in the course of 2003: 126 per cent for Arabic, 792 per cent for Chinese, 77 per cent for English, 108 per cent for French, 173 per cent for Russian and 115 per cent for Spanish. The size of these increases reflects the phenomenal growth in overall Internet use in such countries as China, as well as the significant measures taken by the Secretariat to promote multilingualism by making more pages available in all the official languages. The introduction of a new search engine that can be employed for searching in all official languages is also making it much easier to locate relevant materials.

275. To facilitate movement towards parity among the official languages, the Department of Public Information has been establishing partnerships with academic institutions that provide pro bono translations. Agreements have already been signed with Minsk State Linguistic University (Belarus), Shaoxing University (China) and the University of Salamanca (Spain). Discussions with possible partners on arrangements that would enhance the Arabic language site are well under way.

276. Special measures are being implemented to improve access to content on the web site for users with disabilities. Technical guidelines have been drafted by a working group of the Publications Board, and all content-providing offices are being encouraged to conform with them to the maximum extent possible.

277. The United Nations News Centre online portal, which is now available in all official languages, continues to draw a steadily growing number of visitors. The stories posted there by News Services Section staff appear with ever greater frequency on the web sites of various United Nations offices and agencies, as well as major media outlets, non-governmental organizations and other external entities. The portal's e-mail news service in English and French now has over 25,000 subscribers in more than 100 countries. This service should be available in all official languages before the end of 2004.

278. Turning to our more traditional outreach activities, it is encouraging to note that after a dip in the number of visitors to United Nations Headquarters in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001, the number of people taking guided tours rose again in the period covered by the present report.

279. United Nations Radio continues to provide daily and weekly news reports and features in the six official languages, as well as Portuguese and Kiswahili, to hundreds of radio stations around the globe. Weekly programmes in seven other non-official languages are also distributed. The audience for this programming is conservatively estimated at 200 million people. The radio service is expanding the material on offer with a new programme on Africa and the development of a dramatic programme for children.

280. United Nations Television estimates that an audience of 2 billion people sees its programming, including hundreds of hours of coverage supplied to the world's broadcasters through daily feeds covering meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other events and conferences. Through an expanding network of partnerships with major broadcasters, United Nations Television's productions of "World Chronicle" (a weekly talk show), "UN in Action" (a series of features on the work of the United Nations system) and the annual "Year in Review" have enjoyed larger audiences than ever before, as have its latest productions: "The United Nations: Working for Us All" and "The Security Council: Keeping the Peace".

281. Over the past year, the Department of Public Information has also co-produced a series of public service announcements in connection with the observance of 13 international days. These announcements, produced in association with an outside partner, were distributed to 200 television broadcasters in 70 countries and received positive feedback.

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

282. The successful partnership between the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships and the United Nations Foundation entered into its seventh year in March 2004. Since the inception of this partnership in 1998 and until the end of 2003, a total of $563 million had been allocated to fund 292 projects with activities in 121 countries and involving 35 United Nations entities. The cumulative amount of co-financing from other funding partners, such as multilateral and bilateral donors, was $187.4 million. Projects have been funded worldwide in four programme areas: children's health; population and women; environment; and peace, security and human rights.

283. Over time, the focus of the UNF-UNFIP partnership has developed from the exclusive programming and funding of individual projects to also "telling the story" of such projects and of the work of the United Nations in general. The Foundation plays a unique advocacy role by virtue of its ability to increase understanding of the United Nations on the part of potential partners and the public. At the same time, the Foundation's extrabudgetary contributions are able to be used in ways that core funds cannot, opening up possibilities for innovation and creativity that the Organization alone would not be able to provide. Through UNF matching grants, new partners have come forward to collaborate on United Nations causes in a range of areas, such as protecting biodiversity, preserving World Heritage sites and combating disease.

284. Building on a series of innovative initiatives, UNF, the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies, UNEP and UNFIP hosted the Institutional Investor Summit on Climate Risk in November 2003. The Summit brought together 200 pension fund managers, United States state treasurers, government officials, business executives, representatives of non-governmental organizations and senior United Nations staff to explore the connection between climate risk and fiduciary responsibility. It culminated in the signing of a 10-point call to action by key participants with responsibility for over $1 trillion in assets.

285. As a result of the success of the UNF-UNFIP partnership, UNFIP now functions as a clearing house for partnership information and a facilitator of funding opportunities for the United Nations. Increasingly, UNFIP provides a full range of services to build key networks, alliances and partnerships. A recent example of this is the Citigroup Private Bank partnership with UNDP. This collaboration brought a dozen of the Bank's clients to Mozambique and South Africa in April 2004 to explore opportunities to support the United Nations projects they visited.

286. UNFIP often provides advice to the private sector and foundations on United Nations policies and procedures, as well as suggestions on strategic ways for external entities to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In 2003, UNFIP was instrumental in getting the European Foundation Centre (an umbrella organization of over 500 foundations) to adopt the Goals as their framework for action, with an emphasis on supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS. New partnerships were established with a number of institutions, foundations and corporations, including the Citigroup Private Bank and Citigroup Foundation, the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy, the Council on Foundations, the Education Development Centre, Europe in the World, Hewlett-Packard, the Hilton Foundation, Microsoft, the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation, PricewaterhouseCoopers, the United States Chamber of Commerce and Vodafone.

287. In 2004, UNFIP assumed responsibility for providing support to my Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace, particularly with regard to his activities aimed at promoting field-level projects using sport as a tool for development.

Project services

288. In a multi-year effort initiated in 2003, the United Nations Office for Project Services set out to strengthen its financial condition, improve its competitive edge and streamline people, processes and technologies to acquire new business and meet client and market needs cost-effectively and efficiently. To position UNOPS for long-term viability, its management must make a series of strategic investments in 2004 and 2005. The goal is to recast UNOPS as a client-centred organization that contributes effectively to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and the broader peace and development agenda of the United Nations.

289. In terms of 2003 performance, UNOPS continued to adhere to its self-financing principle. Total project delivery for 2003 amounted to $490.6 million, with revenue totalling $66.2 million and expenditures $47.8 million. UNDP remained the primary client of UNOPS, which continued to be a valued partner also of the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other lending institutions because of its acknowledged expertise in loan supervision and disbursements.

Civil society and business partnerships

290. After a year of extensive consultations at the country, regional and global levels, my Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations submitted its report entitled "We the peoples: civil society, the United Nations and global governance" (A/58/817). The Panel based its proposals on four main principles, namely, that the United Nations needed: to become a more outward-looking organization in response to the changing nature of multilateralism; to embrace a plurality of constituencies and establish new partnerships to tackle global challenges; to connect the global goals with local reality; and to accept a more explicit role in strengthening global governance, emphasizing participatory democracy and deeper accountability of institutions to the global public. Building on those principles, the Panel made a total of 30 proposals in the following areas: the convening role of the United Nations — fostering multi-constituency processes; investing more in partnerships; focusing on the country level; strengthening Security Council dialogue with civil society; engaging with elected representatives and parliamentarians; streamlining and depoliticizing civil society accreditation and access to the United Nations; providing the necessary additional resources; and providing global leadership in enhancing engagement with civil society.

291. The Panel's report is a valuable contribution to the reform process of the United Nations. I am particularly pleased that the Panel has proposed a number of concrete ways of increasing the participation of civil society representatives from developing countries, strengthening partnerships with civil society in the humanitarian and development areas and encouraging greater involvement of parliamentarians in the work of the United Nations. As the Panel suggests, the effectiveness and the relevance of the Organization would increase if we found ways to strengthen the involvement and participation of civil society. I intend to submit to the General Assembly, at its fifty-ninth session, further comments and suggestions regarding practical steps that might be taken in response to the Panel's recommendations.

292. The past year witnessed rapid growth in the Global Compact, the corporate citizenship initiative I launched in July 2000 to advance universal principles in the areas of human rights, labour conditions and the environment. An impact assessment undertaken by the international consultancy McKinsey & Company observed that the Global Compact, with more than 1,500 companies from 70 countries, was the largest corporate citizenship initiative in the world. Moreover, the assessment concluded that the Global Compact had, overall, had a positive impact by encouraging companies to adopt or enhance policies related to social and environmental issues while galvanizing partnerships between businesses, labour groups, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

293. A major milestone was the Global Compact Leaders Summit, which I convened on 24 June at United Nations Headquarters. With nearly 500 leaders in attendance, it was the largest gathering ever of chief executive officers, government officials and heads of labour and civil society organizations on the topic of global corporate citizenship. One of the most noteworthy Summit outcomes was the adoption of the tenth Global Compact principle, dealing with anti-corruption. The Compact thus entered the worldwide fight against corruption, a scourge whose main victims are the world's poor. There was a range of other important outcomes, chief among them: (a) a pledge by 20 major financial companies to begin integrating social,

environmental and governance issues into investment analysis and decision-making; (b) an announcement by a number of stock exchanges that they would explore collaboration with the Global Compact, with many agreeing to actively share information on the Compact and on corporate responsibility with their listed companies; and (c) an announcement by the Department of Management of the Secretariat that the Global Compact's principles would be adopted in key areas of the Organization's administration, such as procurement, investment management, facilities management and human resources.

294. The Summit also featured calls to improve the accountability and integrity of the initiative. Leaders from several civil society organizations expressed keen concern about the Global Compact's credibility, urging that the initiative further explore ways to ensure that the commitments by companies to the Global Compact's principles are translated into concrete and transparent action. Indeed, it is crucial that the reputation of the United Nations not be threatened or harmed by a failure to focus on quality assurance. Therefore, I announced at the Summit that the Global Compact Office would begin a process to improve the overall governance of the initiative in order to provide such safeguards. It is also clear the Global Compact's more than 40 country networks hold great promise. Moving forward, the Global Compact Office will focus on helping to make such local networks truly dynamic and sustainable. They will be key assets as we strive to realize the vision of the Global Compact: a more sustainable and inclusive global economy.

Chapter VIII
Conclusion

295. As the present report demonstrates, the United Nations has continued to carry out a wide range of activities in difficult times, consistent with the principles and purposes of its Charter. These activities reflect all the major international problems and concerns, and are a part of the struggle for a world of greater justice. Despite formidable challenges and obstacles, the Organization's efforts are helping us to build a better future.

296. The architects of the Charter were guided by a central idea — that durable international peace could be built only on foundations of interdependence. Underpinning this idea was the rule of law and multilateralism as the only rational basis for civilized discourse among nations. Shared responsibility was at the heart of the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted in September 2000. Much has changed since the Millennium Summit, and even more since the Charter was adopted. Yet the values of interdependence and shared responsibility remain fundamental.

297. Next year we will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. It will provide an opportunity for fresh thinking about the problems of our world and how the Organization can address them. It is my hope that in the coming months, Member States, the Secretariat and other entities of the United Nations system, civil society and business organizations, as well as individuals around the world will work together to ensure that the anniversary will be worthy of the United Nations and everything for which it stands.

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